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## Events of the Week.

THE method of making war that Germany has adopted in Belgium has created a situation without parallel in modern warfare. An entire people is either starving within its own borders or seeking the shelter of exile, escaping from the drastic propaganda of a culture which may at any moment find it necessary to make the lot of the civilian population intolerable. These exiles have poured into England and Holland. The Dutch Government and the Dutch people have behaved with the generous sympathy that is natural to their race. But the problem that faces them is overwhelming. In several towns the refugees are to the inhabitants as two to one; in some the proportion is even higher. It would seem impossible to provide for the full refugee population in Holland, but it would surely be practicable to arrange for the accommodation of part of this population in Dutch homes if a large grant were made for the purpose. We have no doubt covered part of the difficulty by permitting the import of all the food which the Dutch want for their own consumption; but obviously Holland cannot afford to feed this crowd of newcomers. Why should not Parliament vote what is necessary, the grant to be made to the Belgian Government, and the money administered through the agency of the Belgian Consuls in Holland?

THERE remains the terrible puzzle of what to do about the threatened famine in Belgium. Germany is in occupation, and has gone near to annexation. She has plundered, terrorised, and destroyed until she has ruined the country, driven part of its people away, and turned others into homeless and resourceless wanderers. What is to be done? There is, of course, a danger that if we send in food, it may be used for the

benefit of the German Army. Indirectly, it would have that effect, for it would relieve the German treasury and organization. But we cannot possibly let the Belgian people starve. That is unthinkable. Is not this a case in which the neutral Powers—and especially the United States—might intervene to avert all this suffering and arrest the threatened famine? Why should not the American Consuls, acting with the representatives of other neutral Powers, superintend and organize the administration of help? If they made themselves responsible for the distribution of food, there would be no danger that food destined for the unhappy Belgian people would be diverted to the use of the troops who are occupying their country. And the full help of this country could then be given without stint and without misgiving lest the effect of that help should be to prolong the agonies of Belgium.

THERE remains the third Belgian problem: the plight of the thousands of Belgian exiles now in the United Kingdom. It is clear that the unofficial organization that was established for looking after the needs of the exiles is unequal to the great task now thrown upon it, and that the Government will have to make itself responsible for this work. The Local Government Board would seem to be the suitable Department, working with the help of a powerful Advisory Committee. The business of finding suitable work is a delicate one, needing care and consideration. We think naturally of intensive agriculture for peasants. Some of the experiments that the Development Commission have in view will furnish opportunities, and special kinds of work and industry suggest themselves. But, first of all, the Government must take over the entire task of looking after the exiles, seeing to their accommodation and entertainment, and working out practicable schemes of employment.

THE proximity to our own shores of the fighting in the Western area has made it exceptionally interesting to us this week. But the biggest events have been in the East. It is difficult to estimate the extent of the Russian success before Warsaw, but at the least it amounts to a substantial check to the German advance, and removes the possibility of any reinforcement of the German armies in the West. In the Franco-Belgian theatre the Germans seem to be attempting a double task. They are still trying to break the French lines between Arras and Roye. They are also trying to advance along the coast from Ostend to Calais. The squandering of effort between these two objects may result in a failure in both. A great part of their North and South line may be permanently held, like their East and West line along the Aisne. On both these fronts a deadlock is possible. But the line from Nieuport to Lille is necessarily a shifting line, since the flat country offers no natural advantages for a prolonged defensive. Here, one supposes, the Germans ought to advance. But this week's news tells of a slight Allied advance in this region at some points, and at others of the successful repulse of German attacks. But in spite of obstinate fighting and heavy losses, the actual change in the long lines in the West has been very small during the week.

THERE is no doubt that the German advance upon Warsaw has been checked. The Russian retirement in Poland (though not perhaps in Galicia) was evidently voluntary and deliberate. The reasons for it were, first, a faith in Polish mud as a means of embarrassing an invader; and, secondly, the fact that the Russian concentration round Brest-Litovsk behind the Vistula is not yet or was only lately completed. But it was no part of the Russian plan to allow Warsaw to be taken. For about a week heavy fighting took place before it, and the German forces were "thrown back, and are now in full retreat." Though this success was evidently complete, the Russian telegrams do not allow us to estimate its extent, and specific mention is made of only two German Army Corps by number. At the least, the German advance guard has been beaten, but the success may turn out to be much bigger than that. Further south, no decisive success is claimed, and here the Germans did rather better, crossing the Vistula at one point only to be repulsed in later fighting. The Russian messages are very confident, and the German official news is significantly silent about the Polish theatre. In Galicia heavy fighting is still going on with the advancing Austrians along the San. The Austrians have not relieved Przemyśl, but neither have the Russians taken it, after much the longest siege which we have yet witnessed in this war.

THE fighting in the Western theatre during the week has disclosed no notable change of position. The line stretches from before Nieuport, through Lille to Arras, and down to Roye. At Nieuport our ships have intervened. Along the Yser, the Belgians have defended the crossings of the river alone, during four days, on a front of eighteen miles, against heavy odds, and the Press Bureau has warmly praised their work. Armentières, the centre of last week's cavalry fighting, has been re-occupied by the Allies, and some ground has also been gained round Arras in a stubborn ten-days' battle. The fighting between La Bassée and Lille has been peculiarly obstinate, and was indeed a "house-by house" advance in a flat country, thickly populated, and much broken by canals. On the whole, the French official news has spoken chiefly of violent German attacks, which have been repulsed, and seldom of an aggressive by the Allies. The German news is to much the same effect, and it claims only a local success over our own troops, in which 2,000 prisoners are said to have been taken. The French still retain their hold of some territory in Southern Alsace, and among the definite successes reported this week is an advance which has weakened the German hold on the "peninsula" of the Meuse at St. Mihiel.

EVENTS at sea have been more than usually interesting this week, but the submarine is still the centre of the problem. German submarines have been active "in the northern waters of the North Sea," presumably off the Scottish coast, and have sunk the "Hawke," a cruiser of 7,350 tons, dating from 1889. It is the loss of life which matters, rather than the loss of the ship, for of her crew of about five hundred, only fifty-two are known to be safe. The "Theseus," which was with her, was missed, and evidently had to obey the new rule against waiting to save life. This loss was more than balanced in a brilliant action off the Dutch coast. The light cruiser "Undaunted," with four destroyers, surrounded four German destroyers, and sunk them all by gunfire, losing only four men wounded. It seems likely that these German craft were trying to reach one of the Belgian ports. In one way or another some

German submarines have achieved this feat, for it was reported unofficially on Wednesday that two of them, which attacked some of our ships off the Belgian coast, were beaten off with loss by our destroyers. The mine-field is evidently not a sufficient obstacle against submarines.

THE Belgian coast has witnessed a simultaneous battle on land and sea, in the air, and under the water. The German trenches near the shore about Nieuport were bombarded by the three monitors purchased from Brazil on the outbreak of the war. The "Severn," "Humber," and "Mersey" are slow but heavily-armored river gunboats, carrying 6-in. guns. Their light draught enables them to operate in shallow water, in which submarines can hardly approach them. They brought down a Taube and a Zeppelin, and are said to have silenced several guns and caused 1,600 casualties. This performance is of good omen for the retention of the Belgian and French coasts. On the other hand, the Admiralty seems to be paying little attention to the doings of the German cruisers which are still at large in the Southern Seas. The "Emden" has sunk, in the Indian Ocean, five more British merchantmen and captured two, bringing up the total of her victims to nineteen. She has now caused a loss of over two millions, and has greatly raised the cost of insurance. Official news also reports the loss of the British submarine E3 in a bay of the German coast, the first to be reported. A German submarine has also for the first time acted as a commerce-destroyer, sinking a British trawler off the Norwegian coast.

AN ample budget of despatches published yesterday completes the official narrative of the naval engagement in Heligoland Bight. The efficiency of the work done by the surface ships in that battle had already been realized by the public. The despatches, however, throw much new light on the work of the submarines. We learn that they were actually at work reconnoitring the enemies' anchorages in his own waters within three hours of the declaration of war. To them also is ascribed much of the success in transporting the Expeditionary Force without loss. If they have so far done little in the way of sinking the enemy's ships, it is solely because none of his capital ships and few of his light cruisers have ventured out of harbor. At the Battle of the Bight submarines were present on both sides, but our ships managed to avoid them by manœuvring throughout the engagement at high speed—a fact which makes the excellence of their gunnery the more remarkable. The weather conditions, however, on that day were not favorable to submarine work, and neither side made any offensive use of them.

SIR JOHN FRENCH's second and third despatches, dealing with the last phase of the retreat, the victory on the Marne, and the first phase of the battle on the Aisne, were published on Monday. They made close and difficult reading, and are far more sparing in comments than his first narrative. Some conclusions follow, however, fairly clearly from them, though they are not drawn explicitly by Sir John French himself. In the first place, we think there is evidence that the German defeat on the Marne was caused less by General Joffre's turning movement, in which he employed a secret reserve, concealed behind Paris, than by von Kluck's own rashness in suddenly altering his direction to the south-east, after he had got before Paris. He meant, presumably, to strengthen the German centre, which was making an effort to achieve a decision by breaking the French centre

at Vitry. In so doing, he had to march across the French front, a manœuvre which rashly exposed his own flank.

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For this error there were probably two reasons. First, he supposed that the British force was incapable of further effort, and, secondly, he may have been compelled to aid the German centre because of the removal of von Hausen's army to the eastern theatre. The effect of General Joffre's turning movement was felt only after this German mistake had begun to tell. Another interesting fact which emerges from the despatch is that the Allies only realized, after several days of fighting on the Aisne, that the Germans had taken up permanent positions there, and were not simply fighting a rear-guard action. It is clear that chance and error still play a large part in war, and that neither German espionage nor the work of the Allied airmen give either side an absolute knowledge even of the central facts about the doings of the other.

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MR. CHURCHILL'S defence of the attempt to relieve Antwerp has been embodied in a cheering message to the Naval Division on their return. The argument is that no other troops could be spared for sending, that their training, though incomplete, was as good as that of a large portion of the besieging force, and that the enterprise only failed because the supporting troops were not available. As it was, however, it was "helpful" to delay 60,000 Germans before Antwerp. Meanwhile, the "Morning Post" continues its campaign against Mr. Churchill, mainly on the ground that he has given an autocratic character to his management of the Admiralty. It calls for a stronger Board, and for its restoration to its lost position of real "control." Apparently it also would give Sir John Jellicoe control of all the fleets and their auxiliaries. We cannot go into the general question now, but critics of Mr. Churchill might do him the justice to remember that he was especially responsible for three developments of the greatest value in this war—aviation, submarines, and fast light cruisers.

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THE Government have issued orders for the internment of all alien enemies of military age in this country (Germans and Austrians between the ages of seventeen and forty-five). The meaning of this announcement is somewhat obscure, and we wish that Parliament were in session, so that its motive and scope could be examined. It is suggested that it is a precaution against spies, but it is clear that a spy may have reached the age limit of military service, or may be a woman, or a naturalized German, or a member of a neutral nationality. An alternative suggestion is that the danger is in some degree supposed to be military, and that the general example of Germany is to be followed as to the internment of enemies of military age. If this is the case, we should have preferred a scheme for the exchange of such prisoners, if it were practical. The present plan has the objection of being applied to many persons with the friendliest feeling to us and of high and unimpeachable character and of involving distress or even starvation in their families. Surely in such instances it would have been enough to call for British sureties. A second objection is that it seems to be a hasty response to newspaper sensationalism, which keeps its foolish eye fixed on German waiters rather than on German soldiers and sailors.

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WE suppose, however, that the Government had chiefly in view the necessity both of protecting the good

name of the country from such outrages as the looting of German shops in Deptford and Camberwell, and of preventing reprisals in Germany on our own citizens who have been interned there. There is the further consideration that so many Germans have lost their employment that some form of internment is necessary. When the scare journalist has ceased to raise bad passions, we shall hope to see the natural kindness and good sense of our people reassert themselves. The difficulties are great. The number of Germans in the country is said to be 70,000, and this represents a very large and not an easily manageable community. If it cannot be dealt with effectively and humanely on the present lines, internment seems the only alternative. But there is the strongest obligation on the Government to see that no reproaches lie against us on the ground of bad management or harsh conduct in the concentration camps. And we hope that the present scheme is fairly elastic.

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WHATEVER may be the political effect of the war in Russia, it has already led to one enormous social advance. The sale of alcohol was prohibited during the period of mobilization, doubtless because drink had worked such havoc during the partial mobilization against Austria in 1912. The prohibition worked so well that it was extended for the period of the war, and people began to notice that the productivity of Russian labor, alike in field and factory, was raised by something like twenty-five per cent. The Tsar has now announced that he has "decided to prohibit for ever in Russia the Government sale of alcohol." The loss to the revenue will be over eighty millions sterling annually. The ultimate gain to Russia may be enormous, but the manner of announcing this act of beneficent despotism is far from suggesting that the Duma is to be treated as a reality, even in the sphere of finance. Politically, nothing is changed yet. Professor Pares, who is a sort of official British correspondent at the front, has had an interview with Count Bobrinsky, the new Governor of conquered Galicia, in which that celebrated reactionary explains the steps which he is taking to promote (we hope no stronger word is applicable) the conversion of the Ruthenian peasantry in masses from the Catholic to the Orthodox Communion.

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PORTUGAL continues to make preparations to take her stand beside the Allies. A force of about 16,000 men has been sent out chiefly to Angola, but in part to Mozambique. The Royalists seem to have reckoned—we imagine mistakenly—on the unpopularity of this policy. There was an attempted rising on Monday at Bragança, on the northern frontier, and at Mafra, near Lisbon. The official communiqué states that it achieved nothing more than the cutting of telegraph wires and the interruption of local traffic. On the other hand, King Manoel warmly approves of the Republican policy, and has written to his lieutenant, Senhor Coutinho, advising national unity in this crisis, and a suspension of civil feuds. He has himself offered his sword to King George. It seems to be the case that the traditional alliance with Portugal has been formally renewed in recent years, but no official statement on our side has ever informed this country what obligations the Foreign Office has assumed towards Portugal. This is a case which lends point to the weighty and impartial protest against the secrecy of our foreign policy which Mr. Austen Chamberlain made in a speech at Hanley on Wednesday.



## Politics and Affairs.

### NATIONAL CHARACTER AND THE WAR.

No part in the European struggle is more important than its present and ultimate effects on the character of the peoples who are waging it. Armies in the field are not everything; even their sustenance depends on the state of mind, the quality of the spiritual force of the nations behind them. We have M. Milyoukov's witness to the singular and almost universal mood of "moral sobriety" with which the course of the war is followed in Russia. Abundant testimony exists to the same strain of subdued but enduring virtue, answering to the sternest acts of discipline, in France. For a description and an explanation of this French temper, lovers of the political thesis will be strongly drawn to M. Ernest Dimnet's new book, "France Herself Again" (Chatto & Windus). M. Dimnet is no critic of the judicial mind and reserved form of Sainte-Beuve. He writes as a pure reactionary, to whom almost any form of monarchical government would be preferable to a Republic. He is a partisan, a clerical, an anti-Parliamentarian, and he sees in the moral recovery which he celebrates a reconquest of the French character by the conservative, the traditional, elements in its life. France has come home from her dreams of peace, of internationalism, of a materialist society based on "little work, much leisure, few moral obligations," from her "unreasoned enthusiasm," to her habitual yearning for "strength, authority, and order." For internationalism, patriotism; for the visions of youth, enlightened common-sense; for musing on things to come, a clear, unillusioned vision of things as they are.

This is the path which M. Dimnet thinks the mind of the French people, or of its directors, has travelled since the establishment of the Third Republic and the constitution of 1875, which determined the balance of the governing powers. M. Dimnet takes many things in his stride. He admits that the seeds of the worst that has happened to the Republic were laid by the Empire. But he likes to imagine a process of complete disillusionment from the ideals of French democracy as embodied within the period of the Radical movement. As to the end of this conversion, he seems a little uncertain. In one concluding passage he suggests that the newest French thought may have banished humanitarian principles only to bring them back again, accompanied by a "milder and more poetic form" of patriotism. And he seems to me to ignore, with much lack of science or even of imagination, the contribution which this detested Republicanism has made to the *renaissance* of the French spirit both in its charm and in its vital force. He detests the Revolution, and applauds Taine's criticism of it. But from the Revolution flowed the conception of the unity of the French nation (and of the French Army), the "simple patriotic feeling"—with its wide "moral radiance"—that M. Dimnet sees re-emerging from the faction-fighting of the Chamber. He deplores the separation of Church and State, and as to the manner of that transaction many British Liberals are in agreement with him. But he is his own witness that within the womb

of that great change lay—as its calmer critics within the Church discerned—the seed of a revival of religion, and of at least a modification of the average sceptical attitude to religion. Does M. Dimnet really want a French Church at the mercy of the Roman Curia? Would he not have preferred a discreet return to the Gallicanism which fell before the stroke of the Power that destroyed the Modernist movement? For there are redeeming features even in neo-Voltaireanism. Has not poor Anatole France been responsible for a return to the traditional graces of French classicism? Thus the more we change, the more we revert. M. Dimnet himself would not change too much, for after examining the chances of a Pretender, he concludes that France would prefer M. Poincaré, turned into a real President, with the powers of Mr. Asquith or President Wilson, to a mere return of Prince Napoleon or the Duke of Orleans.

But let us not, in these grave times, ignore the slight element of truth in M. Dimnet's criticism of political idealism. He has chosen to make of his book a drama, showing the French nation asleep in the first two Acts, and awakened in the third by the noise of the Kaiser's visit to Tangier. France then saw herself politically divided, and her army demoralized and unprepared, in face of the German threat of a return to 1870. So she set her house in order, ridding herself of her internal distractions, renewing the old passionate cult of the army, and re-furbishing her military power. Some large assumptions lie beneath this rude dramatization of French politics under the Republic. It is convenient for M. Dimnet to forget that it was the Empire which plunged into the weak and disorderly struggle of 1870, and the Republic which has conducted the wonderful campaign of 1914. And if Dreyfus was an innocent man, and was found guilty, as M. Dimnet admits, on forged evidence, was the French Army the weaker or the stronger for the purge of the General Staff of that day? Or take the general moral of his essay on French statesmanship. Force meets force in Western Europe. But the battle is also one of ideals; and if the issue is here and there confused, the essential line is drawn between freedom and absolutism. It is because the British people felt that we and France stood for democracy, and for all that democracy promises and implies, that this war in both countries has become a people's war.

Nevertheless, we need not fear to admit that both French and British Liberalism failed to realize what a grim entanglement of pure force had been constructed round the citadel of their hopes. They looked for something like a new organ of international, or at least European, politics, so as not to lose what we had gained, or thought we had gained, for the people. We in Britain wanted peace; we wanted disarmament; we wanted to see the menacing lines of the system of alliances melt gradually into the forms of a European Concert. Radical France was not unsympathetic to this movement; the country was assuming, as M. Dimnet suggests, the character of a pacifist State, while retaining much of her military spirit and genius, as well as the nationalism which the Revolution bequeathed to her. The Liberal miscalculation was



in thinking that Germany was less in the hands of an explosive militarism, framed to burst on Europe at any convenient hour, than she proved to be. Where it was right was in feeling sure that militarism might stem civilisation for a while, but could not govern it, and that a new Europe was in building, for which we were bound to prepare. If this view is not correct, and we can only cast out militarism by more militarism, then the Bernhardt-Treitschke thesis is proven, and a deadly, recurring, see-saw strife of Empires and their allies is before us. But we contend for an appeal to old and noble instincts of mankind, placing the love both of country and of a freer national life against mere predatory Imperialism. The latter, being all organization, has got the start of us, partly by force partly by fraud, and also because democracies cannot move without a feeling on the part of their governors that public opinion is with them; the former, being spiritual as well as material, has the power to attract sympathy, to last, and therefore, to conquer. Did it go too far, and hope too much? Quite possibly. But, as it has no end that is incompatible with a free and living Germany as well as with a free and living Britain and France, whereas our enemy desires at heart neither the one nor the other, but rather cherishes an absurd and cloudy vision of a Europe subject to her General Staff, we cannot doubt what will be the issue of the quarrel.

H. W. M.

#### "WOMEN AND CHILDREN LAST!"

It was a happy idea of the "Times" to publish a series of historical articles from the pen of Mr. Fortescue, describing the great deeds of British regiments in the past. There is no nation less military—in the sense that word bears on the Continent—than our own; and yet there is no nation that produces better or braver soldiers. It would be impossible to imagine a greater contrast than the contrast between Prussia and Ireland; the one the country where all the ceremony and discipline of a military civilization are developed to the farthest point; the other essentially the home of the leisurely and careless manners of a race that can be led anywhere through its imagination and driven nowhere by force or authority. Yet the Irish soldier, whose bones are buried on all the battlefields of the world, need not shrink from comparison with the Prussian, to-day, or yesterday, or a century ago. If anybody is inclined to think, with the Kaiser, that a nation has to put its institutions into uniform if it wishes to fight better than anybody else, he would do well to reflect on the part that British arms have played in the history of the world—and the part they are playing to-day—and the remarkable jealousy of military pretensions that has characterized our spirit and system of government. Read the debates that followed Waterloo if you wish to see how those sound and fundamental ideas survived twenty years of warfare and a triumph that might have turned the head of the most sober people.

Mr. Fortescue's interesting pictures leave unsaid—of necessity—a good deal about which the modern world is beginning to ask questions. There is a side of the life

of the army on which even his monumental history is incomplete. Who were the men who died on these battlefields, how were they treated, what became of them after war was over? Mr. Fortescue can tell you everything about the officers whose names often recur with each succeeding generation, woven into the proud traditions of a regiment. All honor to their memory. They were brave fighters and brave leaders. But they were not the only brave fighters. Dr. Johnson thought the British common soldier the bravest man in the world, and brave leaders, as Sir John French reminds us in happiest phrase in his last admirable despatch, succeed because they turn to good account the qualities of the men they lead. The majority of the men who died were not officers; the majority of the wives and mothers at home were not the wives and mothers of colonels or captains; the mass of men who were disbanded with peace passed into the every-day struggle for food that constituted the existence of the common people. It is not enough then to follow Mr. Fortescue's history. We must study, for example, the scathing pages in which Cobbett described the life of the common soldier, and we must follow the fortunes of the men who were heroes yesterday, and to-day are the proletariat. We shall find them as agricultural laborers in the forlorn ranks of the rising of 1830, or languishing in prison under Vagrancy Laws and Combination Acts. It brings epic history into cold relation with common life to read how a soldier from the army that dragged itself to Corunna to bury the best loved general in the British Army in the best remembered grave in history, spent a year in prison and years in want for no other crime than leaving his factory in Stockport, and trying to raise his wages.

We are now again in a great war. For ten years the word Social Reform has been ubiquitous, taking the place Imperialism had occupied in our discussions. We have continually been assured that the lot of the wage-earner was the chief pre-occupation of Ministers, that all their efforts were directed to attacking the evils of poverty, low wages, wretched conditions of living in town and country. If these aims and hopes still animate our rulers, we shall conduct the war in a spirit as remote as possible from the spirit of Dundas and Castlereagh and the politicians who got together the armies that fought the great French War. The social and economic ideas then in power have been repudiated by all parties, and by nobody more emphatically than the Chancellor of the Exchequer. And yet we fear, if Cobbett came to life again, he would find some remarkable discrepancies between the sanguine and inspiring rhetoric of the last ten years and the conduct of the richest nation in the world to the men and women whose wrongs inspired some of his most powerful Philippics. We have been at war for nearly three months, and the Government have not yet been able to bring themselves to the point of recognizing that their obligations to those whom they employ in the dangerous trade of war are not less substantial than the obligations they enforce on private employers. Six weeks ago we urged in these columns that the nation ought to treat its soldiers and sailors better than employers treat their workpeople under the Workmen's Compensation Act, and this contention, we are glad to

see, is being pressed in several quarters. The "Globe" printed an article the other day, showing that the cost of a complete system of pensions would be a comparatively trifling element in the expenditure of the war. But, whether it is great or small, what charge on our resources should take precedence of it? Is it contemplated that everybody is to be reduced to five shillings a week—a widow's pension at this moment? If not, why is that fate reserved for the wives and mothers of the men who give the State not merely eight hours a day in an office but life itself, at an age when life itself has certainly not lost its attractions?

The story is told of a tradesman who was pressing a bill on the polite but unpromising attention of Charles Fox, and he observed that Fox, though apparently unable to satisfy his demand, was at that very moment paying a gambling debt. He submitted to Fox that his conduct was inconsistent. "Not at all," was the reply; "there is this difference; that was a debt of honor." The tradesman promptly tore up the bill, and asked to have his claim put on the same basis, with the result that he was paid. The debt to these widows and relations is, in the eyes of nine Englishmen out of ten, a debt of honor not less pressing than the nation's debt to its Ministers, to its officials, or to the holders of Consols. If we are too poor to pay it, there is a great deal else that we are too poor to pay as well. If we are rich enough to pay other claims, we are rich enough to pay these. When the House of Commons re-assembles, men of all parties will join together, we are convinced, to press this on the Government, and we do not believe that any counsels of timid and short-sighted prudence could stand for a moment against the indignation and self-respect of a people. "Women and children last" is not an exhilarating formula, and the formula does not become more attractive when the women and children are the widows and orphans of soldiers and sailors whose exploits and conduct supply the fire for every politician's oratory.

Let the Government, then, satisfy the nation by treating the soldiers and sailors with simple justice and giving an adequate pension to the wounded, the disabled, the widows and orphans and other dependents of those who die on the field or in the hospital. It is clear that the proportion of disabled will be larger than in earlier wars. Let us have a little of what Mr. Churchill calls the modern eye in this business. And not only in the matter of wages and pensions. Is it not time that the War Office received more outside help? The muddle over the separation allowances illustrates the disadvantage of leaving all this kind of work to an overtaxed department, organized for the supervision of a small army in time of peace. In this case, a number of women, who were rejoicing in Mr. Asquith's promise of a more generous scale, found that, instead of the extra money they expected, they were given a form on which they were compelled to argue against their husband or against the War Office that they needed it. The defence for this proceeding is, apparently, that the War Office believed that to take the husband's contribution—when he was serving at home—was *ultra vires* (they had been doing this for some weeks), but, with a queer logic of their own, they are prepared to take the risks if they think the

woman needs it. The entire transaction is one of the crudest pieces of unkindness that a public Department could commit, and the explanation is so involved that the woman who can understand it ought to be made a First Class Clerk in the Treasury. In another direction there are frequent complaints. It is said that bad clothing is being supplied to the troops, and that some of it is being made under most improper conditions. We should have hoped that the Government would have taken pains to procure lists of firms that could be trusted to pay their workers fairly, and to supply sound goods instead of shoddy. A public protest has been made at the Stepney Borough Council, members alleging that sub-contractors are paying wages below those fixed by the Wages Boards. The uneasiness that exists on the whole question of the provision made for the troops is considerable, and the revelations of last year are enough to account for it. The War Office does its own immediate work admirably. The dispatch of the army to France reflects great credit on its powers of organizing war. But the task of supplying the needs of a huge army—housing, clothing, food, recreation—demands qualities and experience that cannot be improvised in a department that has its hands full already. If that task is badly or imperfectly performed, there will be terrible consequences to the life, health, and happiness of the men who have joined the Army because their country needed them, and those responsible will not readily be forgiven by the nation.

#### GERMANY'S ECONOMIC STRAIN.

THE awful possibility that the war may be brought to an end by famine, beginning, perhaps, in Belgium or in Poland, is already being discussed by those who are in touch with economic facts. Famine is the familiar companion of disease and even of plague, and although it might be possible for the Germans to provision their troops in Belgium while the population was starving to death, the spread of epidemic disease in the towns would almost certainly be communicated to the soldiers. Antwerp, it is said, was well provisioned; for the Belgian authorities unfortunately believed the city to be impregnable. But a month ago, in Brussels, well-to-do people were living largely on soup, and even in Holland at this moment white bread is so scarce that middle-class people are glad to procure black bread or the potato bread, which is also being manufactured in Germany in order to husband the supplies of wheat and rye. In France there is no serious lack of ordinary food, but as a precautionary measure the tariff on wheat has been abolished, so that Free Fooders have suddenly triumphed in the classic land of agricultural protection. The chief trouble for the moment is the high price of sugar; for the districts overrun by the Germans were the chief beet sugar growing districts of France. In Russia, all kinds of grain and other export commodities, such as butter and eggs, are cheap and abundant, because the Baltic and Black Sea ports are blocked just at the time when the Russian harvest begins to be exported. The blockade of imports and exports accounts, of course, for the high price of all articles of manufacture and also for the

difficulties of exchange, which appear in a heavy depreciation of the paper rouble.

But, fortunately for our prospects and for the hope of an early termination of the war, economic exhaustion is likely to tell most heavily in Germany and Austria, which, in proportion to their wealth, are spending more than the Allies. Austrian finances were in no condition to meet the strain of a great war. Long before it broke out, both Hungary and Austria were faced by heavy deficits, and they have been borrowing at high rates of interest to meet the strains on revenue caused by an excessive expenditure on armaments. Their foreign trade had been badly hit by the Balkan War; and now their only resource is to be found in issues of paper currency. The public finances of Germany were comparatively sound; but the German banks were not strong in liquid resources. German trade is dependent on credit, and the banks were heavily involved in loans to factories, merchants, and shipowners. The war struck German trade all of a heap. The German mercantile marine is shut up in port, and is earning no money. Germany's foreign trade, so far as exports are concerned, must have been reduced to a small fraction of the normal; for of its four chief customers—Great Britain, Russia, France, and Austro-Hungary—only the last remains, and that last has no great purchasing power left. Most of the able-bodied men have been withdrawn from the mines and factories, and for the trade with Holland, Scandinavia, Italy, Switzerland, and Roumania, the difficulty must be to find exports in exchange for the food and raw materials which are so urgently required. No doubt a considerable quantity of sugar, chemicals, and dyestuffs are available for export; but they are evidently inadequate. Otherwise the paper of the Imperial Bank would not be exchanging at discounts of 6, 7, or 8 per cent. in Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Zurich.

Nor is there any possibility for Germany and Austria to borrow money in neutral markets. New York, under pressure from the President of the United States, refuses to lend to belligerents. Holland, Switzerland, and the three Scandinavian countries are all at a loss to find the means of supporting their mobilized forces by internal loans. They are also determined to maintain absolute neutrality as long as possible. Italy, of course, has no money to lend abroad, and has great difficulty in putting its army on a war footing in case of emergency. Germany, therefore, like Austria, has to raise the money somehow at home, and the German Government has issued a patriotic loan, which is said to have realized two hundred and thirty millions sterling. This was undoubtedly a clever stroke, and the Imperial Treasury has been applauded and congratulated by the whole German press. But, after all, Germany has to borrow at nearly 6 per cent., while we have been able so far to raise Treasury Bills at about 3½ per cent. Moreover, the accounts received show that this enormous loan has only been obtained by extraordinary measures. It may be called a mobilization of fixed assets—a conversion of all kinds of unsaleable securities into currency. The Government supplies the banks with paper money; the banks lend the money to all who have property to pledge, and these property or security-owners pay back the

money into the banks, receiving in return 5 per cent. Government bonds. It is a huge transaction, and a complicated one; but when it has been stripped of all technicalities it is little more than a disguise for issues of paper currency; and we may be pretty sure that before long Germany will be so flooded with paper that the Government will be compelled to begin paying out its gold reserve. In itself this does not, as the American experience in the Civil War showed, point to an early end of the war. It implies a great concentration of the national wealth in the hands of the Government. So long as that Government is trusted, and the war is popular, it can still go on, until the actual destruction of wealth becomes so great that the people can or will no longer live under the strain.

But, it may be asked, how long will this loan last? Evidently it cannot be used to mitigate distress; for the Prussian Diet is now being asked to vote 75 millions sterling for that purpose in Prussia, and the big municipalities have already resorted to similar measures. We may generally guess at the German military expenditure by reference to our own, which at this moment is probably not less than a million a day. Now, if we have a million men in arms, Germany has probably at least six millions. And if we have 200,000 at the front, Germany has at least two millions. If, therefore, the German army costs as much man for man as the British, Germany would be spending by one computation six millions, and by the other ten millions a day. If we assume that Prussian economy halves the cost, then she is spending either three millions a day or five millions a day. No comparison can be exact, for our private soldiers are paid, whereas Germany's are not, and there are many other differences to be taken into account. But it must also be remembered that at the same time the ordinary revenue, largely from Customs, must have almost shrivelled away. The requisitions and levies in Belgium and France cannot yield much more; and we are, therefore, justified in supposing that, as winter draws on, the financial, and, less conspicuously, the economic plight of Germany must rapidly deteriorate.

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#### THE RESTORATION OF POLAND.

For the first time in two centuries the Poles are in luck. The three Powers which in successive partitions destroyed their national existence have fallen out, and each side in this universal war has promised them in some form and in some degree the restoration of their unity. There could be no more dramatic proof of the magnitude of the shock which this war has dealt to the accepted system of European policy. For generations the joint responsibility of Russia, Austria, and Prussia in the crime of Poland's destruction has been a guilty bond between them. To maintain the partition was always a guiding principle to Holy Alliance and Drei-Kaiser-Bund. When, from time to time, relations grew uncomfortable, conservative voices in the three Empires would hold up a warning finger, and declare that nothing must be said in haste and anger which might arouse the hopes of the Poles. When a serious revolution in Russia



seemed imminent, a reactionary organ, "Rossia," a newspaper which was reputed to be the mouthpiece of the late M. Stolypin, published a statement in which the Poles were warned that if a revolution should occur, the Kaiser would march to the Tsar's assistance, much as the Tsar Nicholas occupied Hungary in 1849.

All this belongs to the past. Russia, in an official proclamation to the Poles, has promised to recover from her enemies the portions of old Poland which belong to Austria and Prussia, and to give them something which is rather vaguely called "autonomy." The German plan was announced even earlier. We have not seen the full text of it, but apparently it promised the union of Russian and Austrian Poland (we hardly suppose that German Posen was included) under an Austrian Archduke. In either event the Poles stand to gain. The Germans have themselves accepted the principle of Polish nationality, and they will have no right to complain if the Allies invite them to contribute something towards its realization.

It is time, however, to consider the views of the Poles themselves. They demand unity and self-government, but their demand is likely to take the form of a claim for the restoration of the Kingdom of Poland. They would probably welcome, as a second best, "autonomy" within another Empire; but that is not their ideal. Among their present masters, they prefer the Austrians to either of the others, and as decidedly they prefer the Russians to the Germans. Austria has given them a fairly satisfactory form of Home Rule. She pets their aristocracy; she tolerates their Socialists; she does not repress their language; and, of course, she fosters their church. Russian rule has meant, in addition to all the usual police methods, the absence of any sort of self-government, the suppression of the Polish language, and a policy towards the Catholic Church which fell far short of toleration, and used to amount to active persecution. German rule means the enjoyment of ordinary civil rights, and also liberty of religion, but the heavy efficiency of the German bureaucracy, combined with the spirit of Zabern, have done even more than the policy of "plantation" and the forcible expropriation of Polish landowners to make German rule odious to the Poles. The Russian is always a human being, fallible, inefficient, and corrupt at his worst, sympathetic, genial, and charitable at his best. The German is either a pedant or a drill-sergeant, and it is the way of subject races to prefer a human chaos to a mechanical order.

The dream of the old kingdom of Poland is never likely to be realized in its extreme form. The Poles at the height of their prosperity were a conquering race, who held in subjection a great extent of territory which can never be restored to them. Poland must mean an ethnological unity. Its frontiers must include no districts in which the Poles are not the decidedly preponderant majority. We are not sure that even this definition could be pressed without some reserves. Parts of Prussia which once were Polish have become, by assimilation and emigration, the most German parts of Germany. It is a curious irony of history that the man who did more than any other to create the modern German chauvinism, Treitschke, was himself a Pole. No one in this country, we hope, would listen to proposals for

the alienation of East and West Prussia, of Hanseatic Dantzic, and of Kant's Königsberg. Russia, we imagine, would be equally averse from such a policy. Nor is it at all likely that anything resembling the old monarchical Republic of Poland can be restored. A modern independent Poland must be either a democratic Republic or a conventional monarchy with a constitution. It is obvious, too, that an independent Poland would necessarily remain in close economic connection with Russia. Even if Dantzic were made a free port, industrial Poland could not dispense with the Russian market, and would be starved if the Russian tariff excluded her textiles and her hardware.

We can think of no more decisive way of turning our backs upon all the evil anti-national past of Europe, with its military conquests and its dynastic settlements, than the restoration of Poland. It would mean on a great scale the sort of thing which the restoration of Major Dreyfus to his rank in the army meant in the internal politics of France. It is good to end our European tragedies with a really dramatic "curtain." By such deeds we shall announce that a new era has dawned. But none the less, we would not sacrifice too much to drama. In this instance we believe that good drama is also good politics, and that for several reasons. In the first place, if we assume that Germany and Austria will be required to disgorge their bits of Poland, it would certainly be easier to ask them to contribute to an independent Poland than to aggrandize Russia. It would be like asking a man who has done you wrong to give something to a charity, instead of fining him and pocketing the fine yourself. It is conceivable that this solution might be accepted much earlier in the war than sheer downright annexation. It would be infinitely less humiliating, and would therefore cost less blood to-day, and less bitterness to-morrow. Russia, moreover, would contribute the largest share of territory, and in that superficial sense she would lose, though she would gain immeasurably by winning the Poles as her friends and allies. The settlement which would exact the less blood to establish, would also require the fewer armaments to defend. In plain words, the Germans would be much less likely to plot or arm against an independent Poland than against a Russia which included parts of what was lately their own territory. There is a certain security in the modern world for any settlement which rests on intelligible lines of race and history. Poland, indeed, was partitioned, but all the world has ever since thought of this deed as a crime. An Empire enjoys no such sanctity. Empires were made by the sword, and the plain man is apt to think that they are fair game for the sword.

These are reasons why it seems to us that an independent Poland would be at once the easier and the securer solution from the European standpoint, apart altogether from its appeal to the imagination. From a purely Russian standpoint, there is much else that may soon be said and certainly will be thought. Russia, if she decides that the solution is to be Polish autonomy, must either disappoint the Poles or make discontent among her own people. If she gives the Poles a genuine democratic system of self-government, she may please them, but she at once sets the rest of her subjects

asking why true orthodox Russians should be treated less liberally than these westernized Catholics. That was the reason why the Finnish Constitution was once destroyed, and again infringed. It is also the reason why the first Alexander's liberal Polish Constitution was never restored after the great insurrection. If, on the other hand, the "autonomy" granted to Poland was illusory, timid, and unreal, another difficulty would at once make its appearance. The united Polish people would agitate for fuller rights, using every half-concession to extort more, and the fresh millions of Polish subjects added to the Empire would only serve to swell the volume of the demand for liberty. There is here a difficult dilemma for any Russian Government, and no solution of it could be quite final short of a re-construction of the whole Empire on liberal and federal lines. Because there is no sign at all that governing circles in Russia are contemplating so vast a change as that, it is conceivable that their interests might agree with those of Europe to favor the creation of an independent Poland. With a Russian nominee for its King, and a Customs Union, it would be bound far more closely in reality to Russia than a discontented autonomous Poland could ever be. Independent, it would be a buffer and also a buttress; autonomous, it might prove to be a source of disruption. We are nowhere near the moment when this momentous question must be decided. But it is certain that the Poles may hope for much; it is not unreasonable to hope for everything.

#### THE COURSE OF THE WAR.

It is just two months since the concentration of the Allied armies was completed on the Franco-Belgian frontier. Our attention has been distracted by events more crowded and multitudinous than our continent has ever known in so brief a space of time. All the armies of Europe have been making war, as it were, by steam and petrol, and happenings which the volcanic energy of a Napoleon could not have compassed in months, have been concentrated within weeks. But the salient fact is so far that the war has nowhere brought with it even a partial decision. There have been great marches, splendid exploits, gigantic battles, and, above all, a slaughter which defies arithmetic. Provinces have been occupied, and a little kingdom over-run. But none of these things are the real object in war. The blunt definition of Clausewitz still holds its ground. The object in war is to destroy the armed forces of the enemy. It matters little whether this object is attained by capture, by the slaughter of masses, by attrition, or by demoralization and disintegration. The basis of all clear thinking about war is that it is the effort of armies to destroy the enemy's organized force, and the winning of victories, the taking of places and positions, and the occupation of territory are only incidental to this end. Now the one quite certain fact about all the fighting hitherto is that it has produced only one battle which was quite decisive in the sense that it ended in the destruction of a large part of one of the armies engaged. That was the battle of Tannenberg, in which General von Hindenburg annihilated General Samsonoff's army, took more prisoners than Louis Napoleon lost at Sedan, and cleared

East Prussia of all its invaders. General Russky's success in Galicia seemed almost equally decisive, but the Austrians had the Germans to fall back upon. But in point of fact, the Austrian armies, though demoralized and subject to a humiliating incorporation in the German command, are not destroyed, and the Russians are to-day forced to defend positions which they won from these same beaten Austrians a month ago. Elsewhere there is no reason to suppose that the German casualties have, on the balance, been very much heavier than those of the Allies, or that either side has "destroyed" much more than it has lost itself.

There is another test by which one may measure the course of a campaign. Has the enemy, who had at the outset of the campaign the initiative, come near achieving what he meant to achieve? Here we are reduced to guess-work, and nothing is easier than to delude oneself by accepting exaggerated reports of boasts by the enemy. But there is not much doubt that the Germans did really expect that their march through Belgium would carry them straight into Paris. It is probable that they also misread the temper of the French and supposed that France would be so intimidated by the fall of Paris as to accept a separate peace on easy terms. Measured by that expectation, the Western campaign has been from the German standpoint a failure. It has indeed resulted in the occupation of a large extent of territory, which the Germans appear to hold with tenacity. But the political result has not been attained, and in a military sense there has been no decision. Even the Belgian army has not been "destroyed," and on a small scale it is recovering itself by contact with its Allies, as the Austrians also have done.

We are on less sure ground if we attempt to pass from registering the facts to guessing at causes. Why was it that the German rush into France, which began so terribly well, came so early to an indecisive result? One may note the fact that von Kluck made the mistake of under-rating his adversaries, that he risked on the Marne the proverbially rash manœuvre of marching along their front with his flank exposed, and that General Joffre surprised him by gathering an outflanking force secretly behind Paris. But there is, we suspect, a simpler explanation than any of these. The invasion and devastation of East Prussia was a diversion which tempted the Germans to send a whole army prematurely eastward. So far as we can ascertain, the Allies had, in consequence, a superiority of two corps upon the Marne, and they used it with good effect. It may have been balanced since, and that is why the campaign in the west seems to approach a deadlock.

The campaign in the east is oddly similar to that in the west. If we clear our minds of the extravagant hopes which were based on the early Russian successes in Galicia and East Prussia, the broad fact is that the Germans have invaded Poland much as they invaded France. They met, indeed, with less opposition in their main advance. But the result has been the same. They got even nearer to Warsaw than they ever came to Paris. They have been thrown back, and though it is possible that they may entrench themselves and occupy positions which the Russians will have great difficulty in taking,

their success is not likely to amount to more than the occupation of territory. Save at Tannenberg, they have not "destroyed" Russian armies. They are not at all likely to reach the Russian bases behind the Vistula. They have failed to take Warsaw, which would have been a moral success comparable in some degree to the capture of Paris. Let us assume (and it is probably the least favorable assumption possible) that the campaign in the east will continue to resemble the campaign in the west—that it will be a vast, slow war of entrenchments, more like a siege than a battle.

The general conclusion from both theatres will then be, we think, that though the Germans have occupied much territory, they have lost the initiative with which they started. It may be rather soon to reach this conclusion. For a long time indeed it has seemed that the Allies had the initiative in the West. They have gradually obliged the Germans to change their fighting front. It is no longer the Aisne, which is now held mainly by second-line troops on both sides. It is now the straggling curve which sweeps from Nieuport on the coast, through Lille and Arras, to Roye and La Fère. We read of continual fighting, which is evidently more murderous than decisive. Here a village changes hands three times in as many days. Lille is taken and re-taken. Round Roye the tale of attacks and counter-attacks is monotonous in its uniformity. For some forty miles of this line the Germans have had the luck to find a newly-dug canal, almost completed, but not yet flooded, which has served them as a deep ready-made trench. It is far from certain that much has been gained by this change of front. The chance of turning von Kluck seems almost to have vanished, but equally there no longer seems to be any likelihood that the Germans will turn the Allies in the North by sweeping down the coast, or breaking round from Lille. The southern stretch of this line has also evolved its siege-like aspect. The fact seems to be that good trenches, defended by the deadly modern machine-gun, are nearly impregnable, or rather they require an expenditure of men for their capture which the Allies cannot at present afford.

If we are to reason, as sober men must, on the assumption that there is little to choose in skill, in *moral*, and in organizing power between the opposing forces, we may have to conclude that the present approach to deadlock may continue, until the relative numbers can be decisively altered. Attrition ought in the winter to tell more heavily on the Germans, for they are much further than the Allies from their bases. The Germans have, however, larger reserves of untrained men and youths than the French, and they will gradually use them. We have the new army and the Colonials maturing, and ought to be able with them to turn the balance. The decisive fact is that the Russians have the largest reserves of all, though with less power of bringing them to bear promptly. Unless the Germans can regain the initiative, and make in one theatre or the other a really crushing use of it, the end would seem to be fatally determined by the mere factor of numbers, and the decision may come in early spring. Such calculations err, however, by a certain mechanical fatalism. It is the

organization, the mechanism, the deadly system of this war which chiefly impress us, reducing, as they do, the play of genius to a minimum. But even to-day luck asserts itself, and able commanders make mistakes. The decision may come, after all, when we least look for it.

### A London Diary.

ROUGHLY speaking, there are two theories as to the immediate prospects of the war on the western frontiers. The first is that a second general German retreat is inevitable, which cannot be stayed, at least until the armies have reached fresh prepared lines on the Sambre and the Meuse. The second and less hopeful is that while the German attack on the coast will certainly be repelled, the series of actions now begun can only end in a second round of engagements in "dug-outs," in which, while the general advantage rests clearly with the Allies, they can hardly hope to do more than push back the German line mile by mile to Belgium. Those who take this view are influenced in the main by their belief in the destructiveness of machine-gun fire against infantry advancing on entrenchments, which, on the German side, are more elaborately built than on that of the Allies. This fact has been tested on both sides, and the losses from rushing tactics are so enormous now that they cannot be lightly risked. It would be different if either army possessed forces overwhelmingly superior to the other. But though we have an advantage in this respect, it can hardly be a crushing one. If the campaign is going to be long we must save men, even though we shall have (from the British side) an increment better in quality and finally superior in numbers to anything which the Germans can put into the field. Of course, even this pessimistic view implies the complete ultimate defeat of the German plan. No conquest of France, no second rush on Paris, seems now possible. And the "conquest" of Belgium is likely to be almost as embarrassing to its authors as to its victims.

As the German press has published the story of a supposed Anglo-Belgian Agreement in 1906, based on documents said to have been found at Brussels, it may be well to state what precisely are the facts. No such Agreement has ever existed. If General Grierson and General Barnardiston were available, they would both say so, as Belgium herself has done. The idea that Belgium was any less determined to protect her neutrality in 1906 than in 1914, whatever the quarter from which she was threatened, is absurd. But the sequel has shown that she had only too good reasons to fear an attempt upon it. Since 1906 Germany has established her elaborate network of strategic railways leading from the Rhine to the Belgian frontier, without any conceivable commercial purpose behind them. Moreover, 1906 was the year following the first German demonstration against France in Morocco. Was it, therefore, unnatural for General Grierson (an officer of one of the guaranteeing Powers) to talk over with Belgian soldiers the possibility of a violation of Belgian neutrality? If Germany contemplated no such



violation, the offence of such conversations was not against her. Probably some such conversations did occur, and notes of them may exist in the archives at Brussels. If they did, the years have shown that there was every justification for them.

THERE is some reason to believe that Russia has given an assurance that she does not desire to acquire any German territory as a result of the war.

It is curious to note how frequently in their letters from the front, our soldiers enter into comparisons between actual warfare and "manœuvres." "Better than at manœuvres," testifies one writer, speaking of the victualling arrangements. Yet "manœuvres," as every soldier knows, have been in recent years a good deal more than a mere picnic. A few days ago one of my correspondents was talking with a wounded young infantryman, who had shared in the fatigue, and hunger, and constant perils of the day-by-day and night-by-night retreat from Mons. "I hope I may never have such another time," said the lad, summing up the story of his experiences in all simplicity and sincerity. "It was worse than manœuvres."

ACCOUNTS from every part of the country reached by the fugitive tide from Belgium tell the same story—wherever those unfortunate people have been seen their presence has caused a rush of recruits to the colors. I hear this has been particularly so in the North of England and in Scotland, where, hitherto, there has been less direct evidence than in London and the southern counties of Germany's practice of warring on non-combatants. Apologists for the Deptford rioters—misguided fools who are represented as having been provoked to their sudden outburst of mob violence by the tragic spectacle of this latest Belgian exodus—should lay the moral to heart, and preach it to their clients. If refugees continue to act as unfailing recruiting agents for the army, we may well spare the windows of an occasional alien baker.

EXTRACT from a letter from a lady in Berlin. "You in England have much exaggerated ideas of what is going on in Berlin. Everything is normal, except on the day of the Crown Prince's funeral, when we all turned out to see it."

A CORRESPONDENT writes me:—The organization for supervising the camps for which "Wayfarer" asks exists in the Y.M.C.A. They have already 3,000 helpers, but more are badly wanted, more especially of capable women. Their special work consists in furnishing some intellectual diversion for the men, such as teaching French and German—an excellent German manual has already been compiled by them—in serving in the canteens, which are the rivals of the public-houses, and where £70 and £80 a day are often taken in penny purchases, and in organizing entertainments. All these things they are doing most efficiently, and too much help cannot be given them.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### SOOTHING SYRUP OF PSYCHOLOGY.

It ought to be an obvious truth that in all the "social sciences" the selection, rejection, and development of concepts, theories and laws will be affected in no ordinary degree by the interests, passions, and prejudices of the immediate social environment. Is it, for instance, possible to doubt that the classical Political Economy of England owed its intellectual structure and formulas very largely to the interests and viewpoints of the rising manufacturers and bankers, and to the predominant importance of the struggle for Free Trade in the early decades of last century? Such studies can never be pursued with the same measure of "disinterestedness" as attaches to the study of mathematics, physics, or philology. The very material for the social sciences is not procurable in a pure condition, but always with a large alloy of feeling and sentiment, and the light in which it is treated is never "dry." Academic thinkers and teachers of these subjects, when these obvious considerations are pointed out, express genuine indignation at the imputation of such bias. But indignation is not refutation.

For the clearest exhibition of this inevitable defect of social science we must, however, look to Germany. For there is a *naïveté* in German intellectualism that easily outdoes our more sophisticated process. Political authoritarianism selected and stimulated a "philosophy" visibly intended for the support of a strong despotic State. Historical erudition was poured into the cause of Caesarism. Economic science was early and easily diverted into the cause of nationalism. German academic thought may in general be relied upon to produce doctrines convenient to the powers that be, with such embroideries and vagaries of liberty as are required to cloak this deference and preserve the proper pride of intellectualism. The type is perhaps best studied in a single instance taken from its native soil, and put into a widely different environment. Such is the case of Professor Münsterberg, who has placed his intellectual services at the disposal of the United States in the capacity of general expert adviser. He finds a country full of undirected energy, of busy amateurs who do not know how to do anything with knowledge and exactness. He will furnish direction, and teach all sorts and conditions of men to be experts in their several lines. He will teach teachers how to teach, and preachers how to preach, judges how to try cases, doctors how to diagnose, employers how to select and train their staff, tradesmen how to sell their wares, and stockbrokers how to speculate. But besides all this, he discovers in the latest output from his prolific pen another important function for the expert psychologist, to furnish soothing syrup for the social discontent which is worrying business men and damaging prosperity in America.

He propounds the prescription in an essay upon "Socialism" in a volume entitled "Psychology and Social Sanity" (Unwin). "The psychology of feeling is still the least developed part of our modern science of consciousness, but certain chief facts are acknowledged on all sides, and in their centre stands the law of the relativity of feeling. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction, happiness and unhappiness, do not depend upon absolute, but upon relative, conditions." "There is no limit to the quantity of desires. On the level of expansive life the desires become excessive, and only excessive means can satisfy them: on a lower economic level, the desires

are modest, but modest means are therefore able to give complete satisfaction and happiness." "Some of my best friends have to live from hand to mouth, and some are multi-millionaires. I have found them, on the whole, equally happy and equally satisfied with their position in life." "The whole scramble for money's worth is based on a psychological illusion, not only because pleasure and displeasure are dependent upon relative conditions, but also because the elimination of one source of feeling intensifies the feelings from other sources." Why, then, should the wage-earner envy the capitalist? The one gets no more out of his life than the other. Let the worker once realize this gospel of the relativity of feeling, and he will renounce all desire to grow richer than he is now. He will realize that every man carries his riches within himself. So, too, the lamentations over the painful monotony of daily toil are equally foolish, resting entirely upon "a psychological misunderstanding."

"It may be granted that many a man and many a woman stand in the factory day after day and year after year with the one feeling of distress and wretchedness at the hard work to which they are forced. But is their work really responsible for it, and is it not rather their personal attitude? Who is doing harder physical work than the sportsman? There is no more exhausting muscle strain than to climb over the glaciers of the Alps, which thousands pursue with passion." All that is required is to infuse the laborer's mind with the consciousness that "he is serving the great ideal of cultured life," and "the work is no longer dead, but living, interesting, significant, wonderful." All this working-class discontent can be exorcised by getting the workers to take an intelligent view. "Give to the working man the right kind of ideas, the right attitude towards his work, and all the hardship becomes blessedness and the suffering glory." How Dr. Münsterberg can have the face to ply the American public with these shallow, platitudinous half-truths as the fruit of a profound study of "the psychology of feeling," we are unable to conceive. Dr. Johnson indeed asserted that "Happiness and misery are equally diffused through all states of human life," and Adam Smith that "In what constitutes the real happiness of human life, they (the poor) are in no respect inferior to those who would seem so much above them."

But to apply the doctrine as an answer to the claims of labor for a full share of what goes on in life, for comfort, leisure, travel, knowledge, family life, friendship, and enjoyment, is a piece of hypocrisy. In the first place, it is untrue that wealth and the security it brings do not contribute to raise the fund of "real happiness" for those who possess them. To deny this is to convict the great processes of industrial progress of sheer irrationality. Again, while it is true that a right recognition of the social utility of routine manual labor may help to render it more tolerable, it will be an indispensable condition of this change of feeling that all others contribute equally to a service which cannot in itself be made agreeable, and obtain an equal recompense. To pretend that any change of thought can make tram-conducting as interesting as mountaineering, or can remove the physical exhaustion of a long work-day employed in shovelling coal or "feeding" rollers with steel ingots, is as much an abuse of psychology as any device of the crudest Christian Science. To suggest, as Professor Münsterberg does, that, because some natures are better adapted than others for routine and others for initiative work, we can acquiesce in existing industrial arrangements, and regard the present division of labor and of wealth with complacency, is certainly a "record" in "applied psycho-

logy." We can well visualize the audience of wealthy patrons for whom the following doctrine of "social sanity" was prepared: "No distribution of income can change in the least the total sum of pleasure and displeasure in the world, and the Socialistic scheme is of all the useless efforts to increase pleasure and to decrease displeasure the least desirable, because it works, as we have seen, at the same time against those mental functions which secure the most forceful progress of economic life."

#### "I-SPY-I."

At the beginning of August a peaceful and studious English gentleman of middle age was staying in Berlin. He liked Germans on the whole, for he had often lived among them, and it is the most hopeful sign of human nature that the longer one lives among a people or a class the better one likes them. In youth he had been encouraged by Carlyle's writings and the Oxford professors to believe that German literature and philosophy unlocked a mystical door behind which eternal truth might stand revealed. Consumed by irrepressible longing to solve the riddle of the soul, he submitted to the manners and customs of a German University, drank beer, sang songs, strove to enjoy the students' "Tollheit," and with almost Teutonic patience studied the forty-five volumes of Goethe and all the metaphysicians from Kant to Lotze. He did not find what he sought. In moments of discouragement he compared himself with a Saul reversed; for he had gone out to seek a kingdom, and had found his father's asses. But though the nature of the soul and the universe remained to him obscure, intimacy had given him a homely affection for the German people, and even what he disliked in them he disliked with tenderness.

So he happened to be staying in Berlin, marvelling at the transformation effected by wealth since first he knew it, and wondering if idyllic charm still lingered in any gabled town, or fairies in any forest. With innocent voluptuousness, he frequented cafés, finding a childlike pleasure in listening again to the uncouth and childlike language under which he once supposed the depths of wisdom lay darkling. He visited a few shops, and was everywhere received with smiles and politeness. In his hotel he held interesting conversations with the proprietor and a chambermaid who came from his old University town.

But, at seven o'clock one evening, he felt a sudden and far-reaching change. He heard a bodeful clamor in the street. He saw the friendly proprietor calling to the police. He perceived the amiable chambermaid pointing at himself. He felt his arms unpolitely seized by four policemen, equipt with weapons and the helms of war. He observed that he was being rushed out of the front door into the midst of a yelling mob, among whom he noticed two of that morning's smiling shopkeepers. With fists and sticks and stones all were now attempting to solve for him the riddle of eternity without the aid of metaphysics. Anxious for instruction upon this point as he still remained, he breathed more freely when the police forced him into a taxi and sat around him, two with revolvers ready for his head, and the other two with long knives ready to perforate his body.

It seemed queer. What change had occurred in his nature to bring down on himself this sudden outburst of popular displeasure? He was still the peaceful and unpretending gentleman that he had been in the morning, when the Berlin world greeted him with smiles. He still liked the German people on the whole, though he recognized their excessive tendency to specialization and

submission, due to some erroneous conception of education and government. He still admired a good deal of their literature, though he could not put it on a level with the Greek, the French, or even the Italian. He still loved the simple peasants, and acknowledged in the whole race that "politeness of heart" which Bismarck said they alone shared with the English. He was the same man as before, and the people were the same. How, then, had it come about that after the violence of the mob he found a comparative relief in sitting with two revolvers at his head and two side-arms ready to perforate his body?

The reason was that, in the interval, Emperors, Kings, and diplomatists, with whom he had no more concern than with comets or the peaks of Himalaya, had declared war, and from a harmless spectator of time and existence the mania of the mob had converted him into a spy.

In Deptford High Street there dwelt a pork-butcher who came from Germany many years ago, and settled there because he saw an opening for his little capital and his special business. He did not like the district much. He thought the air black, the streets dirty, and the public-houses disgusting, compared with the air, streets, and beer-gardens to which he was accustomed on the Rhine. But still, the more he came to know the people the better he liked them. They were a light-hearted, cheery lot, not entirely disinclined to industry, fond of sport or gossip, and endlessly generous to neighbors in distress. Having studied various means of rendering dead pigs attractive to the appetite, he prospered, married a nice English girl, and labored to rear their children, who pronounced the paternal name in a most extraordinary manner. "All went well," as travellers say when describing the subsequent railway accident to a reporter, till one evening his neighbors, whom he had learnt to like so much, and who had enjoyed his variations on pork so well, filled the street with a yelling crowd, smashed his windows, broke up his furniture and marble slabs, stole or trampled under foot all the meat and sausages, terrified the children almost to madness, insulted his wife, and were threatening to murder himself when a force of police, supported by a company and a half of the Army Service Corps, with difficulty secured his safety in the midst of utter ruin.

It seemed queer. There had been no change in his nature to account for this sudden outbreak of popular displeasure. He remained the peaceful and industrious person that he had always been. He felt no hostility towards his neighbors, and they had appreciated him and his goods for years. But certain Emperors, Kings, and diplomatists, with whom he had no more concern than with comets or the peaks of Himalaya, had declared war, and from a harmless purveyor of pork the mania of the mob had converted him into a spy.

The spy-mania is the subtlest and most contagious of epidemics. Its bacillus arises by spontaneous generation out of fear. It finds its nidus among the suspicions latent in every brain. It feeds on the universal love of mysteries, and on the general antipathy towards every stranger. It propagates itself in the close atmosphere of inactive apprehension, and sweeps through cities like the bubonic plague or a financial panic on the Stock Exchange. Some minds are so prone to the disease that they gibber of spies even in times of profound tranquillity. To suppose oneself haunted by spies is a symptom of approaching dementia recognized in all asylums. By a peculiar perversion, the madness sometimes takes a form under which the patient falsely imagines himself a spy, and with whispered caution

betrays non-existing secrets to any listener. No active movement can hope to escape some infection of spy-mania. Suspicions lurk even in religious or philanthropic committees, and one has known the most transparently honest and self-sacrificing leader of a reforming Society pointed at surreptitiously as a second Azeff. Wherever the mean and timorous little soul occurs, there the spy-microbe crawls into its natural home, and thence it spreads infection among the wholesome but unwary spirits of the crowd.

We have lately, for instance, seen a little evening newspaper diffusing the poison with results such as South London has witnessed. It described the numerous German residents in England as though they were the enemy in arms. Speaking of the German waiters in many hotels and restaurants, it said the other day:—

"The withdrawal of forty of the enemy from the Strand Palace Hotel leaves the line Strand-Charing Cross practically free from German and Austrian hotel servants. Much progress has also been made on the line Piccadilly-Kensington. Strong forces of Germans and Austrians keep their positions in Northumberland-avenue, and in the Bloomsbury and South Kensington areas, but further dislodgments may be expected daily. The attack (in war report language) is succeeding everywhere."

One could hardly imagine a more definite incitement to violence. Further on, in dealing with the same class of foreigners, it speaks of "the cost of permitting German spies to sell London, or perhaps Great Britain, by means of an almost perfect espionage organization." There are still many thousands of English people living in Germany, and up to the present, so far as information goes, they are pretty well treated. These the little newspaper forgets. Their fate does not concern it, so long as it can agitate its readers with the sensation of a big spy-scare. In the same article from which we have quoted, the newspaper which has installed a "culture" of the spy-bacillus, goes on to describe a hotel occupied by a German proprietor—"a hotel which would command five converging roads if it had to be defended by guns, and the inmates of which could, without difficulty, block a line of railway and one of the main London sewers." As an example of the spy-maniac's manner, we suppose this to be unsurpassed. But perhaps it has been equalled by another newspaper, which was writing about a concrete foundation to a building at Willesden. "A 16-in. howitzer, mounted upon this foundation," it continued, "would stand in close proximity to a railway embankment, which it would then command."

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE REFUGEE PROBLEM IN HOLLAND.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Last week, three members of the International Women's Relief Committee visited the Dutch Province of Zeeland, with the object of ascertaining the extent of the invasion by Belgian refugees, the measures taken by the local Committees, and the immediate needs.

They were taken on a tour round the province by the President of the Zeeland Committee, Mr. P. Dieleman, and the Secretary, Miss Anne Bolle, both well-known advocates of Middelburg. They met members of the local committees in every town and village, and inspected the arrangements made.

It was found that in each locality the problem had been slightly different, and had been handled in a different way. But, in all places visited, the refugees were far more numerous than the original population. In Flushing there had been



at one time 80,000 refugees, the normal population being 20,000. In the small town of Hanswaert, with 1,200 inhabitants, there were 15,000 Belgians living in barges. In Hulst, the Sunday after the bombardment of Antwerp, there had been 40,000 people, besides the normal population of about 2,500. There are still said to be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million Belgians in South Holland, and 500,000 in the Province of Zeeland alone.

It is evident that a small country like Holland, with a normal population of four or five millions, cannot support so great an invasion without suffering considerable hardship. Already there is no white bread anywhere in South Holland, except for the sick. Rich and poor alike have to eat a rough brown bread, composed largely of bran and potato. It is not unpleasant to the taste, but a well-known doctor stated that it was highly irritating, and not very nourishing.

The danger to the health of the Dutch people themselves from the unavoidable overcrowding in the sheds and barges where the refugees lodge, is engaging the very serious attention of the Dutch Government. It is of the greatest importance to relieve the congestion before any serious illness breaks out which might prevent the people being moved. The Dutch committees will not, under any circumstances, advise the Belgians to return if the Germans remain in possession of Belgium; but the Dutch Government, in order to remain strictly neutral, has facilitated the circulation of the German proclamations calling upon the inhabitants of Antwerp to return home. There were three German Governors of Antwerp in the first week. Each issued a proclamation—the first mild (too good to be true, the Belgians said), the second stern, and the third absolutely ferocious. The young men are to report themselves instantly to the police. The one concession is that doors may be locked.

It is understood that the Dutch Government have been negotiating with the German Government to get good terms for the people, but they do not seem to have been very successful. Moreover, though in the large cities, where Americans can see them, and along the Dutch frontier, where Dutch people can see them, the Germans are behaving comparatively well, yet there are well-authenticated stories from isolated villages where all the old outrages seem to be in full swing. Naturally, the Belgians, whose nerves have been subjected to every possible strain for the last two and a-half months, are not going back from a safe refuge into such terrors as these.

But the strain on the hospitable and generous people of Holland is too great, and no doles of food will relieve it, except for the moment. Only those who can pay for a ticket can get to England at present; but that is what is so urgently required. The Belgians know that the British Government has undertaken to care for Belgians in England, and they spend their last penny to get there. There was a story of a man who paid 250 francs for a place in a lugger. Every passage is taken in the Flushing boats for days in advance. But those that can pay are few, after all. Holland cannot permanently cope with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million fresh inhabitants, but England could. If England could take the million, Holland could manage the rest. For even if the Allies advance steadily, many of these people cannot return home. There are thousands and thousands who fled from Liège and Louvain many weeks ago. Their houses are destroyed; everything they had in the world is gone. They cannot return the instant the Germans are swept out. If that happy moment arrived to-morrow, it would take months to repatriate the exiles, if they are not to starve in the open fields.

The problem is gigantic; but if Britain cannot solve it, with her great resources, who can? It is Britain's business to solve it, for she is pledged to see Belgium through. The Government here has appealed for further offers of hospitality, and only if these pour in in their thousands will ships be sent to fetch more refugees. And if they are not brought away, and left to fall a prey to cold and disease, the fault will lie at our door almost as much as at that of Germany.—Yours, &c.,

ELLEN WALSH.

74, Ladbroke Grove, W.

October 21st, 1914.

[We agree with our correspondent that the case she exposes, we believe with accuracy, is one making the strongest possible claims on our Government and people.—*Ed., NATION.*]

## THE BREACH OF TREATIES.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*

SIR,—I read in the current issue of *THE NATION* ("The Aims of Britain"): "We need not put the treaty obligations so high as to say that treaties bind for ever, irrespective of time, use, and the way (which may be quite fair and open) of 'denouncing' them. Neither can we concede that they lie at all moments at the mercy of a signatory Power accomplishing the double infamy of using them as a cloak up to the hour of a long-meditated plan to violate them."

In this connection there is no room for doubt or quibbling. Seeking to make assurance doubly sure, the Powers—Prussia being one of them—at a Conference in London in 1871, solemnly covenanted as to the life of international treaties. It had come to pass that in 1870 Russia had arbitrarily set aside the restrictions of Article II. of the Peace Treaty of Paris of 1856, neutralizing the Black Sea. In 1871, it was agreed "that it is an essential principle of the law of nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, or modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting Powers by means of an amicable arrangement."

Germany, as present happenings are showing, was playing the game with loaded dice. The practice is not new; one felt inclined, however, to consider it obsolete amongst honest folk and peoples. Machiavelli put it in a nutshell—"A prudent prince neither can nor ought to keep his word, when to keep it is hurtful to him, and the causes which led him to pledge it are removed." The Kaiser, it would seem, from the great Florentine's point of view, is a "prudent" Prince. The world, alas! however, has waxed fastidious and squeamish, and a preference for loyalty and good faith seems rampant in the conscience of humanity.—Yours, &c.,

S. PEREZ TRIANA.

45, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W.

October 21st, 1914.

## THE CHILDREN OF THE STATE.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*

SIR,—I should like to congratulate you upon your admirable article, "Children of the State." It is now ten or twelve years since I became a student of naval affairs; and I have at every opportunity endeavored to insist upon the national disgrace involved in systematically underpaying sailors and soldiers. Of late years the soldiers (provided they marry on the strength) are better provided for; but no equivalent has been given to the Royal Navy; and in the meantime the prices of the necessities of life have risen.

The first debt of honor to be discharged by a civilized nation is the debt it owes to the Royal Navy, to which, under Providence, its peace, welfare, and riches are due; but that debt is still the last to be discharged by Britain. The pay of the officers has hardly been increased since the time of Nelson. The pay of the men is utterly disproportionate to the equivalent pay on shore. Marriage in the Navy is not recognized by the authorities. At this moment, our sailors are at war, not knowing whether or not their dependents are suffering want. The fact that a vast relief fund has been collected is a proof that the Government have failed not only in honor but in common justice.

Will the politicians venture to deny the principle that the Service man should be so provided by the State that he and his are secure from anxiety, and that his recompense bears some fair proportion to the earnings to be obtained by the same energy and attainments on shore? For how long are we to remark eminent peers and persons of quality entering (in letters to the press) into minute calculations as to whether a wife with three children could possibly be allowed 18s. 8d. instead of 14s. 7d. per week? It is a disgrace to the nation that the question should ever have arisen; not less, that when it has been raised, people should be found reckoning in halfpence how little the Service man's dependents can be given.

It should be the pride of the nation to ensure that the home of every Service man should be so securely founded, so healthy, so comfortable, that it should serve as an example to other homes. How can the bluejacket provide for his home on twelve shillings and something a week? It is very well to cheer him into action and to shout patriotic songs; but why do we not, first, pay him a pound a week

to begin with; and, second, let him be assured that whatever may happen to himself, his wife and children will be safe and comfortable. Cheap patriotism is the vice of the English. It is our shame that it needs a great war to awaken the national conscience in this matter. Let us end the shame now; it is the least we can do. Let every sailor's wife be paid—not given by charity, but paid as her right—not less than a pound a week. Let our eminent persons' calculation of halfpence begin *above* that amount. Thus, and thus only, shall we remove the dishonor of buying our personal comfort with the sweated labor of the Service man, and the toil and want and suffering of his wife and children.

Let the Government, if it is to prove its title, produce a revised scale of pay for the Royal Navy; beginning at a pound a week minimum for the able seaman; and so raising the pay of officers that they can live on it as befits their station and the dignity of their service, and that an Admiral of fifty years' service shall no longer receive less than an Indian civilian of twenty years' service. Yours, &c.,

L. COPE CORNFORD.

Garriek Club.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—In your article "The Children of the State" you deal not only with a soldier's pay and the separation allowance to his family, but also with his prospects when crippled, and his family's prospects if he is killed.

As to the separation allowance, this seems to me much the least ungenerous of the several allowances or payments he or his family may expect. If you add the separation allowance to the man's pay, and remember that he is all found, you must admit that if not generous it is at least not disgracefully low. Many soldiers have joined from the poor parts of London and poor employment; their wives and families will certainly be *very* materially better off now than before their husbands left them. No doubt there are many cases where there will be a very sensible reduction.

It is when you read the ominously italicized words in the War Office notification of the payment of separation allowance, indicating that the payment ceases on the man's death, that you have reason to feel very uncomfortable.

Lord Harris has already pointed out the meagre provision likely to be available from the Royal Patriotic Fund. Surely the dependents of every soldier who dies or is killed on active service ought to receive at least as much as the dependents of a man who is accidentally killed at his daily work.

The services of these men who, at a crisis in the history of the nation, of Europe, and of civilization, have risen so splendidly to the very severe test of war, who not only by reason of their training and leading, but also by the force of their qualities have saved our Allies from serious disaster, and helped to turn retreat into victory—of these men who lie buried or unburied on the battlefields of Mons and Courtrai and Meaux—are not worth less to the country than the services of those who are killed accidentally at their daily work.

There is, indeed, something comically ludicrous in the idea of appraising their services by reference to what they might have been entitled to if they had remained at home and been killed by accident at their daily work (£150 to £300), and not to what they have nobly done for the country; but surely we are not going to give their dependents even less than this minimum amount!

How much more generous and fair, too, is the meaning of the word "dependent" in the Employers' Liability Act than at the War Office!

In the former it includes husband, wife, son, father, mother, daughter, grandfather, grandmother—even illegitimate son, or grandson; but for soldiers it means wife and children only for separation allowance, and has no meaning at all in the case of death.

Worse than this, however, is the prospect of what inevitably very many of the soldiers who return are going back to; underpaid, underemployed, badly housed, in the degrading conditions which, till they are removed, are a blot on our civilization, they will live their lives.

For those social reformers who are determined to go on a step at a time, and not waste their energy amid the vapors of an impossible millennium, the cause of the soldier may

indeed be an added inspiration, may indeed suggest a reconsideration of some of the values imposed on us by the faults and limitations of a civilization in transition.—Yours, &c.,

E. H. BETHELL.

18, Hyde Park Square, W.

P.S.—May I add that all payments to soldiers' wives should *unquestionably* be weekly? Nobody doubts that.

## THE FUTURE OF ALSACE-LORRAINE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Professor A. J. Grant, writing in your issue of October 17th of the Alsace-Lorraine question, asks: "Can anyone tell us what the feelings of Alsace-Lorraine are now?"

Will you permit me to refer your correspondent to a book published this year, "Faites un Roi ou Faites la Paix," by the Socialist leader, M. Marcel Sembat, at present Minister of Public Works, and the first member of the Unified Socialist Party to enter a French Cabinet?

M. Sembat devotes several pages (158-172) to the consideration of the Alsace-Lorraine question; and, after citing several witnesses, he arrives at the conclusion that the most passionate wish of the inhabitants of those provinces is for autonomy. "Elle entend vivre de sa vie propre," he writes. "Elle y trait d'une volonté si ferme qu'elle revendiquerait cette autonomie même contre la France."

Almost the same conclusion is arrived at by M. Bourdon of the "Figaro," the author of that illuminating book, "L'Enigme Allemande," which appeared last year. In an appendix to this book, M. Bourdon gives extracts from a lecture delivered in Paris on February 13th last year by M. Jacques Preiss, formerly deputy for Alsace-Lorraine in the Reichstag. M. Preiss states, emphatically, that Alsace-Lorraine is determined to have her autonomy:—

"Elle acclame la devise 'l'Alsace-Lorraine aux Alsaciens-Lorrains.' Elle réclame sa mise sur un pied de complète égalité avec les autres parties de l'Empire. Elle veut son gouvernement à elle, son pouvoir législatif à elle, indépendants l'un et l'autre dans la même mesure que le gouvernement et le pouvoir législatif du grand duché de Bade, de Mecklembourg et de la principauté de Renos, branche cadette."

But M. Preiss goes on to explain that, with all her ardent desire for autonomy, Alsace-Lorraine does not wish to receive it at the price of war. She is content to wait, sure that, ultimately, the question will come up before Europe, and that all civilized States, Germany included, will listen to her demands.—Yours, &c.,

WINIFRED STEPHENS.

4, Temple House, Hoop Lane, Hendon, N.W.

## ALIENS IN OUR MIDST.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—May we not count upon THE NATION to speak out boldly against the policy which is being urged upon the Government by persons of the baser sort with regard to the treatment of Germans and Austrians living in England?

It is, of course, perfectly right and proper to take every precaution to protect ourselves from spying and from outrage; and persons caught in either of these acts are justly punished. But it is altogether wrong to set to work to make the life of every German and Austrian in this country unbearable. There are only two possible alternatives: either these people must be allowed to earn a decent living in this country, or they must all be deported to their own country, we retaining as prisoners those males of military age. There is no third course. To attempt to find one in a policy of miscellaneous bullying is as inexpedient as it is unworthy of the British Empire. It will create the very danger which it professes to guard against by rousing up hatred in inoffensive persons, and it will also lead to reprisals by German citizens against English men and women who have the misfortune to be now living in Germany.—Yours, &c.,

F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

87, Clement's Inn, Strand, W.C.

## NATIONALISM AND MUSIC.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Newman, in his article "Music After the War," is pleased to dismiss the theories of the school which believes in the merits of musical "nationalism" by simply saying "the facts are against it." What facts? The racial facts, perhaps, because everybody who has written on the subject seems to have confounded race and nationality; but the racial facts are not everything; nor are the "folk-music" facts, with which, I admit, Mr. Newman pulverized Mr. Cecil Sharp a year or so ago.

But if, as I expect, Mr. Newman is familiar with the school of modern æsthetic thought, of which Yrjo Hirn's "Origins of Art" is perhaps the best example, he will recognize the fact that all art, including music, is primarily a social activity. Art, in fact, is alive just in proportion to the extent it reflects the moods and passions of the community in which it exists. In short, healthy art is an expression of a particular environment.

Moreover, to be able to do this, it must be assured of economic independence, even though Mr. Newman may sneer at this as "the baser sort of patriotism." To put the matter in a concrete form, it must be possible for British composers, conductors, and executive artists to earn their living before they can translate into musical expression the various tendencies that, taken together, make up the distinctive whole—modern England. Of course, it is quite impossible to develop this point of view in a short letter, though I hope to do so in the near future; but it would be a pity if the case for "nationalism" appeared merely to go by default.

Incidentally, while entirely agreeing with Mr. Newman's judgment on modern French music, it is, I think, unfair to assume, as he appears to do, that had it not rejected the "German instrument of symphonic development," it would have gained musically. It might just as well have lost the originality it undoubtedly has, and gained nothing. Ravel and Debussy, despite their undoubted charm, are rather small men, and it is surely permissible to think that they have, by their peculiar methods, made the most rather than the least of their talent.

As to Stravinsky, one of the big shells fired by Mr. Newman against the "nationalist" defences, he seems to me a convincing argument against the dangers of "cosmopolitanism," nothing more. Insensibly there has crept into his music all the defects of the train-de-luxe Ritz-Carlton-hotel atmosphere in which he has passed so much of his time. He is about as "Russian" as a *salade russe*.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS TOYE.

3, Buckingham Street, Buckingham Gate, S.W.  
October 21st, 1914.

## Poetry.

## LA CATHÉDRALE DE REIMS.

Qui parcourait les plaines d'or de la Champagne  
En ces midis d'automne où le pampre reluit  
La regardait venir à lui  
Comme une impérieuse et tranquille montagne.

Depuis le matin clair jusqu'au tomber du jour,  
Elle avançait et s'approchait  
De celui qui marchait;  
Et sitôt qu'il sentait l'ombre des grandes tours  
Qui barraient la contrée  
Le gagner à leur tour,  
Il entra dans la pierre  
Creusée immensément et pénétrée  
Par mille ans de beauté et mille ans de prière.

O vieux temple français gardé par tes cent rois  
Dont l'image apaisée illustre tes murailles  
Dis-moi, quel chant de gloire, ou quel cri de bataille  
Victorieusement, n'a retenti en toi!  
Tu as connu Clovis, le Franc, et sa compagne

Dont la main a guidé la main de Saint Rémy,  
Et peut-être un écho sous ta voûte endormi  
Jadis, a entendu la voix de Charlemagne.  
Tu frissonnas, pendant des siècles, pour ton Dieu  
Quand le monde connut les nouvelles croyances,  
Mais tu restas debout sous le ciel large et bleu  
Grâce au respect que te voua toute la France.  
Temple, tu es sacré de ton faite à tes pieds;  
Au soir tombant, se joue à travers tes verrières  
Comme un soleil infiniment multiplié;  
Sur tes grands murs, les ténèbres et les lumières—  
Joie et deuil—font leur voyage silencieux;  
Autour de tes piliers qui fusent jusqu'aux cieux.  
Les petits cierges blancs, de leurs clartés pointues  
Illuminent le front penché de tes statues  
Et dressent leurs buissons de flammes dans la nuit.  
Une immense ferveur se dégage sans bruit  
Des foules à genoux qui contiennent leurs larmes  
Mais qui savent pourtant qu'au long du Rhin, là-bas—  
Canons, chevaux, drapeaux, soldats—  
Se meut et se rassemble un immense bruit d'armes.

Soudain, chacun prend peur;  
Le monde entend passer de volantes rumeurs,  
Les drapeaux belliqueux blasonnent les façades,  
Le peuple crie et rage autour des ambassades.  
Bientôt l'immense guerre envahit les pays  
Les bataillons teutons descendus vers Paris  
Sont rejetés et poursuivis jusqu'en Champagne  
Et puis qu'il fait accueil à tout homme lassé  
Le grand temple de gloire et d'amour traversé  
S'en vient aussi vers eux du fond de la campagne.

Un canon, tout à coup, est bracqué contre lui:  
Il n'est pignon, il n'est muraille  
Qui ne souffre, le jour, la nuit,  
Du brusque éclatement des blocs de la mitraille;  
Le tocsin saccadé halète au creux des tours;  
La triple nef l'abside et le chœur solitaire  
Sont entourés la nuit, le jour,  
D'une ceinture de tonnerres  
Et le crime rodeur guette et répand la mort.

## Alors.

Ce qui fut la splendeur des choses baptisées:  
Ogives vers leurs voutes immobiles élançées,  
Verrières d'ombre et d'or, transepts, piliers géants,  
Orgues faisant un bruit d'orage et d'océan,  
Cryptes dont les grands morts hantaient les labyrinthes,  
Douceurs mains de la Vierge et regards purs des saintes,  
Tout, jusqu'aux bras du Christ immense et pardonnant,  
Fut jeté et broyé sous le piétinement  
Du plus rageur des sacrilèges.

O merveille tuée, O beauté prise au piège!  
Murs de force et de foi atrocement fendus!  
Ainsi qu'un rampement de luisantes couleuvres  
Le feu mordait la chair divine des chefs-d'œuvre:  
On entendait souffrir de beaux gestes tendus  
—Depuis quels temps—vers la pitié et la justice.  
De pauvres voix sortaient du marbre et du granit,  
Les ostensoirs d'argent par les papes bénis,  
Les chandeliers et les crosses et les calices  
Étaient mordus par les flammes et s'y tordaient;  
L'horreur était partout propagée et brandie,  
Les vieux saints du portail choyaient dans l'incendie,  
Et leurs pleurs et leurs cris dans la mort se perdaient.

Autour du grand brasier se battaient les armées  
Le sol retentissait encor sous leur effort  
Que soudain les Teutons rallièrent au Nord  
Leur gauche effrayamment foulée et décimée;  
Pourtant, avant de fuir  
Les aigles impériales  
Certes, ont du voir  
Là-bas, au fond du soir,  
Avec ses bras brûlés, la vieille cathédrale  
Tendre leur honte à l'avenir.

EMILE VERHAEREN.



## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "A History of the Peninsular War." Vol. V. By Charles Oman. (Oxford Press. 14s. net.)  
 "France Herself Again." By Ernest Dimnet. (Chatto & Windus. 16s. net.)  
 "Henri Bergson: An Account of His Life and Philosophy." By A. Ruhe and N. M. Paul. (Macmillan. 5s. net.)  
 "Through Siberia." By Fridtjof Nansen. (Heinemann. 13s. net.)  
 "My Adventures in the Commune." By E. A. Vizetelly. (Chatto & Windus. 12s. 6d. net.)  
 "The Autobiography of Maharashi Devendranath Tagore." (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)  
 "Pages from an Unwritten Diary." By Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. (Arnold. 12s. 6d. net.)  
 "Recollections of an Irish Judge." By M. M. Bodkin. (Hurst & Blackett. 16s. net.)  
 "Antarctic Adventure." By R. E. Priestley. (Unwin. 15s. net.)  
 "From Connaught to Chicago." By George A. Birmingham. (Nisbet. 5s. net.)  
 "Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics." Translated by A. L. Gowans. (Gowans & Gray. 2s. net.)  
 "Dreams." By Henri Bergson. Translated by E. Slosson. (Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)  
 "The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman." By H. G. Wells. (Macmillan. 6s.)  
 "Once a Week." By A. A. Milne. (Methuen. 6s.)  
 "My Husband Still." By Helen Hamilton. (Bell. 3s. 6d. net.)

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In an article on "War and Literature" in the current "Edinburgh Review," Mr. Edmund Gosse expresses the opinion that the fate of books and their writers will be very gloomy in the near future. He believes that publishers will keep the stream of current literature flowing as long as they can, in order to float upon it the books which they had got ready for the autumn season, and he thinks that this endeavor may produce a certain animation in the book-trade in the late autumn. But he fears that it will be merely an expiring flicker, and that when the books already printed have been issued, there will be no more until the end of the war.

"What we must really face," he concludes, "is the fact that this harvest of volumes, be it what it may, will mark the end of what is called 'current literature' for the remaining duration of the war. There can be no aftermath, we can aspire to no revival. The book which does not deal directly and crudely with the complexities of warfare and the various branches of strategy, will, from Christmas onwards, not be published at all."

For this reason, Mr. Gosse advocates the organization by men of letters of effective schemes of mutual help.

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Nobody will deny the value, or even the necessity, of such a step as Mr. Gosse wishes to see taken, but I am inclined to believe that he is entirely mistaken in his outlook. Many of the books published since the war began are doing very well indeed. I know of a novel by a distinguished writer which was issued over a month ago, and for which the orders placed by the libraries were less than a quarter of what they would have been in normal times. But "repeat" orders soon began to come in, so that the book is already an assured success. And I learn that in a less degree this is true in other cases. Indeed, Mr. Gosse himself gives us reasons for not sharing his depression. Comparing the present position with that of France in 1870-1, he tells us how Victor Hugo wrote two large volumes—"L'Année Terrible" and "Actes et Paroles"—during the height of the war, how Gaston Paris delivered his first course of lectures at the Collège de France to large audiences in the winter of 1870, and how Zola planned out the scheme of his "Rougon-Macquart" series at the same period. In fact, as Mr. Gosse puts it, "on the face of a history of French literature in the nineteenth century the war of 1870-1 makes scarcely a scar."

\* \* \*

WHILE it is satisfactory to have assurances that current literature is not in eclipse, one must expect to find the greater share of public attention given to books and pamphlets that have a bearing upon the present struggle. There is certainly no lack of these latter. In addition to the state-

ment of the British case by members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History in "Why We are at War," the Oxford University Press have issued a series of really admirable pamphlets. Nothing could be better for the ordinary reader who wishes to get some notions of the historical development of our allies and enemies, at the least possible expenditure of time. Two of the most effective of these pamphlets are "The Value of Small States" by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, and "How Can War ever be Right?" by Professor Gilbert Murray. Another pamphlet well worth reading is Mr. Cloudesley Brereton's "Who is Responsible?" an examination of the influence of the Prussian tradition in modern Germany, published by Messrs. Harrap.

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BESIDES controversial pamphlets, the war has prompted the issue of books which deal historically with the countries engaged. Foremost among them is the half-crown series of "Britannica Books." These are reprints of the historical articles in the new edition of "The Encyclopædia Britannica," in six volumes, each of which may be had separately. The subjects are "France," "Germany," "Austria-Hungary and Poland," "Russia and the Balkan States," "Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland," and "Wars of the Nineteenth Century," and it is only necessary to add that they are the work of such authorities as Mr. J. E. C. Bodley, Professor W. Alison Phillips, Mr. H. Wickham Steed, Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, Prince Kropotkin, Mr. David Hannay, Mr. J. D. Bouchier, and Colonel Maude. The main defect in these books is that they have neither maps nor indexes. A series, called "The Nations at War," under the editorship of Mr. L. G. Redmond-Howard, is published by Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall, at a shilling each volume. The first three to appear are on France, Russia, and Germany, and these will be followed by books on Japan, Belgium, and Austria. Each contains chapters on the armaments and military and naval strength of each nation, as well as an account of its history, its commerce and industries, and its present ambitions and ideals.

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It was to be expected that many of the letters written by our soldiers at the front should be given more permanent form than that of the daily newspapers in which they were first printed. Already two such collections have made their appearance—"In the Firing Line" by Mr. A. St. John Adcock, published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, and "Atkins at War" by Mr. James A. Kilpatrick, published by Mr. Herbert Jenkins. To read these letters goes a long way to compensate one for the absence of the expert accounts by war correspondents which are forbidden by the censor. They reveal the personality and spirit of the British soldier as nothing else could—his courage and cheerfulness, his occasional flippancy, his adaptability, his frank admission of his feelings when under fire for the first time, and his loyalty to his comrades and his officers. No such interesting human documents have seen the light for a long time, and the books edited by Mr. Adcock and Mr. Kilpatrick are sure of a wide circulation.

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MR. MAURICE BARING has written "An Outline of Russian Literature" for Messrs. Williams & Norgate's "Home University Library." It is sure to benefit by the heightened interest in Russian affairs that the war has produced. Four other volumes to appear in the same series are "Political Thought in England from Bacon to Locke" by Mr. G. P. Gooch, "Wars Between England and America" by Professor T. C. Smith, "The Ancient East" by Mr. D. C. Hogarth, and "A History of Scotland" by Professor Rait.

\* \* \*

FRESH journalistic ventures have not been altogether stopped by the war. Since it began, both "The Daily Call" and "T. P.'s Journal of Great Deeds of the Great War" have come into existence, and London is shortly to have another evening paper, "The Evening Chronicle." At the same time, a number of journalists have been badly hit by the upheaval. The Press Contributors' Emergency Fund is appealing for help for men and women of good literary standing who urgently need assistance. Communications from readers who can give help should be addressed to Miss W. E. Hall, 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster.

PENGUIN.

## Reviews.

### MR. CHESTERTON'S EARLY POEMS.

"The Wild Knight." By G. K. CHESTERTON. (Dent. 3s. 6d. net.)

THE industrious years that separate the first issue of "The Wild Knight" from this new (and welcome) edition of the book have given Mr. Chesterton a decided position in the present world. If it was ever possible to brush him aside, even metaphorically, that is certainly not to be thought of now. Mr. Chesterton is a figure of the day, of accepted and influential standing; you may do anything you like with his enthusiasms and dislikes except pooh-pooh them. The years, however—these same industrious years—have been gradually dulling the edge of one of Mr. Chesterton's best weapons, even while they were so favoring his prowess; and it remains to be seen whether what this particular sword has won must be kept by the sword or lost. The fact is, Mr. Chesterton can no longer surprise us. Now, on the first page of these poems we find this—of God creating the world:—

"Then in the last strange wrath broke His own law,  
And made a graven image of Himself."

And on the last page we find this:—

"And life droops like a vulture that once was such a lark."

And there is, perhaps, not a page in between which does not contain a sentence with some such stab in it. One can easily imagine how, when "The Wild Knight" first appeared, these phrases would stab their readers broad awake—whether into keen delight or into keen discomfort. But now? Well, we have become indurated to these assaults. There are stories of serfs with nerves so toughened by violence that at last they refused to take note of the cuffs and goads of their masters. It is much like that with us; and Mr. Chesterton himself has done it. That deft flourish of intellectual conceit which turns the common idea of the world being an image of God into a breach by God of His own commandment has no longer the power to startle us; and when that power has gone, the phrase, like the serf-driver's goad, has lost its office; for the phrase is pure conceit and nothing more; there is not a trace of real meaning in it; its function is simply to irritate, in the physiological sense of the word. And so with that other line. Scarcely a conceit this time; rather just a neat, poetic joke. Who but Mr. Chesterton would have thought of saying, in a perfectly unexceptional way, that life is, or was, "such a lark"? Yes; it is just like Mr. Chesterton; so like him, in fact, that we really take no notice of it. Here again, Mr. Chesterton's favorite weapon of surprise has, we find, lost its point, or we have become callous. At any rate, the weapon no longer stabs, and the effort which Mr. Chesterton put into it is simply nowadays a wasted effort.

The worst of it is that nothing in poetry can escape having a value, either positive or negative. If something fails to come off in poetry, you cannot just ignore it—leave it out of critical account. If it does not do positive good to the effect of the poem, it does positive harm. The conceits of Marino, taken by themselves, fail to come off; but in Marino's poetry they do not simply fail to come off, they vitiate the quite good qualities which Marino's poetry often possesses. When Mr. Chesterton is playing Marino's game—the game of purely intellectual trope, of extravagance and paradox, of, in a word, conceit—the law which is so hard on Marino also bears on him. But, let us concede at once, Mr. Chesterton can better support the rigors of that law, because there is a good deal more life in him—he has more to say, and a more fervid impulse to say it. Not that a vehement desire to say something necessarily means good poetry, or even poetry at all. Mr. Chesterton certainly had something to say, and was strongly moved to say it, when he composed this verse, with its intellectually attempted surprise made out of apparent inadequacy and obvious paradox:—

"There is one creed: 'neath no world-terror's wing  
Apples forget to grow on apple-trees.  
There is one thing is needful—everything—  
The rest is vanity of vanities."

But, as poetry, that is no better (though, we must admit, no worse) than—

"Three children sliding on the ice  
All on a summer's day;  
As it fell out they all fell in,  
The rest they ran away;"

a verse which curiously seems like an epitome of Mr. Chesterton's poetic art when the desire to surprise is uppermost in it. What is left in our minds of the thing Mr. Chesterton set out to say when we come to the dry clash of that paradoxical antithesis in the last two lines? Very little, surely. Or, again, in the poem called "The Donkey," Mr. Chesterton had something quite striking to say; and in the last verse of the poem, he says it very memorably, with fine restraint and exactly the right emphasis. The contrast intended is between the homely figure of the donkey and its one hour of immortal glory:—

"There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet."

But, in order to prepare us for that climax, Mr. Chesterton thinks he has to labor the contrast in this style:—

"With monstrous head and sickening cry  
And ears like errant wings,  
The devil's walking parody  
On all four-footed things."

Now, a donkey is not in the least bit like that. Really, the only odd thing about a donkey is his voice; though one must be a very delicate sort of person to call it "sickening." The violence defeats its aim. Thus ludicrously to exaggerate the plain grey humility of the donkey (and it is just that and no more which is needed to make the fine last verse of the poem effective), this meaningless foisting in of the devil, makes one feel that the idea itself of the poem, its essential contrast, may be also an exaggeration; which, of course, it certainly is not.

Mr. Chesterton tempts us to begin again that old, endless debate: Is poetry an end in itself, or is it a means to an end? Certainly it is a means to an end, says one party; the object of poetry is to infect us with a peculiar, unique state of mind. Quite so, says the other party; and that state of mind, indistinguishable as it is from its expression, is the poetry. Let us patch up a provisional agreement *ad hoc*. Let us say that poetry *quâ* poetry is an end in itself, but that poetry has the privilege, of which it takes unending advantage, of being all sorts of other things at the same time. The success of "Paradise Lost" as poetry is one thing; its success as a justification of the ways of God to men is quite another thing. What the second success may mean to us ought not greatly to influence what the first success means. But what is clear, too, is that, in the poem, the second success, inasmuch as Milton himself considered it triumphant, is of the greatest possible importance to the first; it supported him, encouraged him—in fact, as we say, it inspired him. For us, the inspiration and its effect are two separable things; so separable that most of us are bound to separate them. But for Milton these two things were one and the same thing or, at any rate, quite inextricably combined. If this can be agreed on (provisionally), how does it bear on Mr. Chesterton's poems? It is simply that we must, once more, separate the inspiration from its effects, however indistinguishable they were for the poet. The inspiration, the motive, of these poems is as confidently propagandist as Milton's; like Milton's, too, the propaganda are, in the main, what everyone would like to see established and triumphant. Not only this world, but the whole unthinkable vast of general existence is an incredibly fortunate affair, and we ought to act as if we knew it. This is so stupendously obvious that it is perfectly stupendous, too, the way some people seem not to have noticed it.

What better motive for poetry could there be than that? And this motive runs through all Mr. Chesterton's poems. We cannot be anything but grateful for it. But we cannot help distinguishing it from the poetry itself; and the success of Mr. Chesterton's propaganda is not the same thing as the success of his poetry. By some freak of his æsthetic nature, Mr. Chesterton is sometimes unable to let the motive speak for itself in his poetry. He must add to it all sorts of adventitious surprises, worked up very dexterously by sheer intellectual ingenuity. Of his conceits enough has been said.

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Sometimes he justifies his rider to "the one thing needed—everything," by elaborately wishing pessimists, certain colors which he dislikes, and a few other things, at the devil; these, apparently, are not part of "everything," but belong to "the rest." Sometimes, again, he tries to make a single word of his message stand for the whole—not, as it well might do, by judicious phrasing, but by vociferous exclamation:—

"In the last wreck of Nature, dark and dread,  
Shall in eclipse's hideous hieroglyph,  
One wild form reel on the last rocking cliff,  
And shout, 'The daisy has a ring of red.'"

Poetry could not well be more mistaken; but the motive is the same as that of Mr. Chesterton's most persuading measures. The motive, indeed, always survives. Sometimes it comes through the poetry as through a very severe ordeal. Still, it does come through. Sometimes—and, we fear, not quite so often—it comes through with wings and vigor added to it. Of this happy consummation we might quote a specimen from the lovely "Chord of Color":—

"My Lady clad herself in grey,  
That caught and clung about her throat;  
Then all the long grey winter day  
On me a living splendor smote;  
And why grey palmers holy are,  
And why grey minsters great in story,  
And grey skies ring the morning star,  
And grey hairs are a crown of glory."

Nothing, again, could be more delicately right, with the diction just sufficiently curious, than the soliloquy "By the babe unborn." And even in the poems which most flagrantly miss fire, the negative effect of their mistakes never has all its own way; there is always some positive good to oppose it, with varying result. We can only dimly surmise how it is that a poet moved by a consistent inspiration of the highest order can sometimes achieve such an attractive success and yet sometimes be so easily satisfied with the merest simulacrum of poetic success. We can only suppose that sometimes, probably without any conscious difference, the motive has been relied on absolutely and implicitly; at other times the reliance has been sophisticated by analysis and argument.

#### MR. HENRY JAMES AS CRITIC.

"Notes on Novelists, with some other Notes." By HENRY JAMES. (Dent. 7s. 6d. net.)

MR. HENRY JAMES is the right kind of critic. He communicates himself, and he communicates his author. He is as enthusiastic as he is fastidious. His devotion to men of genius is not in the nature of a blind party allegiance: he realizes that the greatest compliment we can pay to genius is not to sing its windy praises but to define it, to describe it as it is. He approaches books, moreover, not as miracles suspended in an inhuman vacuum, but as so many clues to the secret of the living genius that is behind them. Thus he belongs by temperament to the biographical school of critics. Or, if one wanted to be more precise, one might call him a portrait-painter among critics. In this age of criticism by the pint and by the yard, we cannot be too grateful for the fine critical portraits Mr. James has given us here of Balzac and Flaubert and Stevenson and Zola and George Sand, to name the most important of his subjects. The first of the two essays on Balzac contains some admirable examples of that careful imagery in which Mr. James's critical ideas take their charming living form. How well, for instance, this expresses the massive energy with which Balzac approached all his subjects, great and small alike:—

"He is 'entire' as was never a man of his craft; he moves always in his mass; wherever we find him, we find him in force; whatever touch he applies he applies with his whole apparatus. He is like an army gathered to besiege a cottage equally with a city, and living voraciously in either case on all the country about."

That Mr. James is a devotee of Balzac on a pattern that is less common to-day than it was a generation ago is a fact that shines in a hundred sentences. He stands in delighted amazement before the spectacle of the mere extent of the

kingdom which the great figure of Balzac occupies—a "tract," he calls it,

"on which we might, all of us together, quite pitch our little tents, open our little booths, deal in our little wares, and not materially either diminish the area or impede the circulation of the occupant. I seem to see him in such an image moving about as Gulliver among the pigmies, and not less good-natured than Gulliver for the exercise of any function, without exception, that can illustrate his larger life."

The genius of Balzac, again, is defined in the scores of scattered sentences, such as that which tells us that

"it was as a patient historian, a Benedictine of the actual, the living painter of his time, that he regarded himself and handled his material;"

or like that which speaks of his gift for

"producing in the reader that sense of local and material immersion which is one of Balzac's supreme secrets."

And with what a surpassing image he conveys to us his vision of Balzac as a doomed creature, done to death by the immensity of the matter upon which he set his genius to work:—

"We . . . never lost the sense that the fighter is shut up with his fate. He has locked himself in—it is doubtless his own fault—and thrown the key away."

This conception of genius as a doom recurs in more than one of the essays. Flaubert was a doomed man, the essay on him suggests, even more than Balzac. "To be literary, represented for him an almost overwhelming situation." And, again:—

"His case was a doom because he felt of his vocation almost nothing but the difficulty."

Flaubert's desperate sufferings as a literary artist, Mr. James suggests, in a finely fanciful passage, may be regarded as the price paid for the transgressions of other novelists:—

"He may stand for our operative conscience, or our vicarious sacrifice; animated by a sense of literary honor, attached to an ideal of perfection, incapable of lapsing in fine from a self-respect, that enables us to sit at ease, to surrender to the age, to indulge in whatever comparative meanness (and no meanness in art is so mean as the sneaking economic) we may find most comfortable or profitable. May it not, in truth, be said that we practise our industry, so many of us, at relatively little cost just because poor Flaubert, producing the most expensive fictions ever written, so handsomely paid for it?"

The fierce self-expenditure of Zola was on a different artistic level from the self-expenditure of Flaubert; but, none the less, the heroic spirit in which the former set to work to build his ugly pyramid out of almost nothing astonishes Mr. James into admiration:—

"His pile of material—of stone, brick, and rubble, or whatever—was of the smallest, but this he apparently felt as the least of his difficulties. Poor, uneducated, unacquainted, uneducated, he set up his subject wholly from the outside, proposing to himself wonderfully to get into it, into its depths—and he went. . . . 'I don't know my subject, but I must live into it; I don't know life, but I must learn it as I work'—that attitude and programme represent, to my sense, a drama more intense on the worker's own part than any of the dramas he was to invent and put before us."

It was Zola's amazing inexperience of life that struck Mr. James as his most remarkable characteristic. Zola fairly bristled, he tells us, "with the betrayal that nothing whatever had happened to him in life except to write 'Les Rougon-Macquart.'" He planned his novel, "Rome," for example, before he had ever been to Rome. With all his literary vices, however—and they were the kind of vices most likely to shock a subtly conscientious critic like Mr. James—he is not presented to us here as a man of less than staggering genius. There is no question to our mind that, if "L'Assommoir" had been written by a Russian instead of by a Frenchman, we should all be "booming" it to-day. There is more here than that sense of crowds, of the "swarm," for which Zola's novels are chiefly notable. Gervaise is an astonishingly living and affecting portrait. And as for "La Débâcle," as Mr. James insists, it "takes its place with Tolstoy's very much more universal, but very much less composed and condensed, epic as an incomparably human picture of war."

## The Daily News & Leader

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The essay on Stevenson, with which the book opens, is perhaps the most sensitive and graceful study of that charming figure which has ever been published. There is the thrill of imaginative appreciation in this as in so many of the essays—that thrill which makes all the difference between fine criticism and mere opinionativeness. And how rich and delicate in comprehension are the essays on George Sand, one of them an odd summons to women in love with rights to go and study the example of that very free lady! Not that Mr. James is a slave to her fascinations. "Vulgar somehow in spite of everything," he writes, "is the record of so much taking and tasting and leaving, so much publicity and palpability of 'heart,' so much experience reduced only to the terms of so many more or less greasy males." He admits the splendid journalism of her work, however. "She interviewed nobody else, but she admirably interviewed herself, and this is exactly our good fortune." The other essays in the book are concerned with D'Annunzio, Matilde Serao, Dumas the Younger, Charles Eliot Norton, the novel in "The Ring and the Book," and contemporary novelists. The last of these essays, which is written in the author's latest and most arabesque manner, reveals Mr. James as a far too lenient great-uncle to some of the younger English authors. The book closes with a series of "London Notes," reprinted from "Harper's Weekly"—notes that, compared with the essays, have a merely journalistic value. We are grateful to Mr. James, however, for giving us in this collected form his critical *parerga* of the last twenty years. "Notes on Novelists" is a golden book of criticism.

#### MOSCOW.

"Napoleon's Russian Campaign of 1812." By EDWARD FOORD. (Hutchinson. 16s. net.)

IN the midst of evils there is always comfort in remembering worse. "Endure, my heart; once you endured worse still," was the encouragement of Homer's wanderer. "You have suffered worse; to our present perils also God will grant some end," said the founder of Rome to his stranded crew. So now, in the midst of this terrible war, even those who have little leisure to spare from our national cares may derive some consolation from reading the drama enacted only a century ago amid events of at least equal terror.

The Moscow campaign was, in reality, only an episode in a twenty years' war. But its limits are so clearly defined that it stands by itself as a separate and complete tragedy. We find in it all the rules of tragedy fulfilled as by a master dramatist who could bring upon the stage some of the greatest figures of history, and support the clash of their tragic motives by a million "supers" confronted in bloody conflict, and by another million involved in the general doom. Every element of tragedy is there—the greatness of the protagonist, the splendor of his surroundings when the drama opens, his pride and overweening self-esteem, defying Heaven with his big battalions, the apparent triumph, the delusion of irresistible might; and then the slow approach to final catastrophe, the ominous murmur of something wrong, the protagonist's blind self-will persistent in accomplishing his overthrow, the increasing crime, the foreboding of wiser prophets, the tightening of the toils, the vain struggles for release, the gathering gloom, the misery infecting whole nations, and the overwhelming crash of irremediable disaster. When the great Dramatist of man's history composes a tragedy, He obeys the same rules as human genius.

Judged by the time and space of history, even the unities were preserved. The few hundred miles between the Niemen and Moscow was the scene, and the time was limited to six months. We discussed the significance of the tragedy when a translation of Labaume's personal narrative ("The Crime of 1812") appeared at the time of the centenary. No doubt Mr. Foord regretted that his volume was not published then. But though its circulation may not now be so large (for everyone looks twice at the money for a book), we think his work gains in reality and interest. We all understand better now what a vast European war really means. The account of its devastation, its misery, its awful bloodiness, is no longer to us a mere tale of a distant past, picturesque

in horror like a Christmas story for boys. We are witnessing war in its true abomination, and we can understand the Moscow Campaign as English people have not understood it for four generations. Besides, the scene has lately become familiar to English minds again. The Vistula, the Niemen, Gumbinnen, Vilna, and the rest are no longer mere names upon a map.

Mr. Foord has accomplished his work with extraordinary care and knowledge. It is a military book, and soldiers will find in it all they want for military history. There is no attempt at rhetoric or eloquence. Now and again, in his account of the human misery in the Army and among the inhabitants, the author breaks off, refusing to continue the appalling but useless narrative of suffering. But the result is not merely a military text-book. It is a page of genuine history, full of human passion, and illuminated by keen perception into the motives and characters of all the chief actors upon the terrible scene. Napoleon himself, Davout, Ney, Eblé, and, on the other side, Barclay, Bagration, and Kutuzov become living personalities again—as living as they and the other people are in Tolstoy's "War and Peace," but depicted with the additional power of strict and unornamented history.

There are certain points which seem of special interest at the present time. As to numbers, Napoleon appears to have commanded nearly 700,000 men near the Russian frontier when the campaign began, and of these about 450,000 were actually engaged during the advance to Moscow, including 80,000 cavalry. He had about 1,150 guns, 200,000 horses, and 25,000 transport carts. Of the forces which took part in the advance and retreat, only 25,000 returned in any military form, and those were "disorganized and generally disarmed men—largely officers—without cavalry, and with scarcely any artillery." Not counting the enormous number of prisoners who must have died (the Russians claimed 48 generals, 3,000 officers, and 190,000 men captured), Mr. Foord estimates that more than 350,000 soldiers perished, besides tens of thousands of camp-followers (a large number of women and children strove to accompany the army to and fro), refugees, and other non-combatants. Such was the fate of the "supers"—the vague and unremembered background—in the tragedy of Napoleonic ambition.

The infantry were armed with flint-lock muskets and long bayonets. They carried fifty cartridges apiece, and fifty pounds of other kit. The cavalry had the straight sword and pistols, but the dragoons carried carbines as well. Cavalry never charged except at a trot, and infantry (something like the Germans of to-day) could not be trusted to advance, except in close and deep formations, which allowed but few muskets to come into action. There were many criminals and other scoundrels in the ranks, and to their presence we may attribute the indescribable atrocities which marked even the advance. But from the first the discipline was bad; pillage prevailed, and in Moscow it became a mania, so that the loads of useless plunder hampering the retreat contributed to the ultimate ruin. One Russian general, after witnessing an outrage too foul to mention, vowed he would never spare a Frenchman. And now what a change the course of only a hundred years has brought!

From the first, the food and supply were bad. In this, as in many other points, Napoleon made the common mistake of exaggerated self-importance. He thought his order was the same thing as its execution. If he gave orders about supply, he assumed the order could be obeyed, and all was well. Even on the advance the men often got nothing but poor meat without bread or vegetables, and water was scarce and bad:—

"The result was a frightful amount of sickness—diarrhoea, dysentery, and typhus—and in a wretchedly poor and sparsely populated region little could be done to reduce it. The sick were left behind in temporary hospital camps, where they died by thousands in the midst of filth, starvation, and general destitution. Of those who went into those dens of misery it was calculated that not one in ten emerged alive."

That was during the advance. To dwell upon the misery of the retreat is, as Mr. Foord says, useless as well as painful. Of the crossing of the Berezina, he writes: "Perhaps no event in history has ever so completely united in itself every element of misery." He mentions one incident new to us:



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that 500 women there got shut in a barn without food for several days, and only about twenty survived. We will, however, take a few sentences only from a more general account of the conditions during the retreat:—

"Had there been a sufficiency of even the coarsest food, the troops might have withstood the cold. But almost the only resource remaining was the unwholesome flesh of the worn-down horses. . . . In their ravening hunger they ate like wild beasts, tearing the raw half-cooked horse-flesh with their teeth, and covering themselves and their wretched garments with blood and offal. . . . Selfishness increased with misery; men thrust their weaker comrades from the bivouac fires, and fought for the wretched carrion on which they strove to maintain their existence, while those who fell were robbed and stripped by passers-by."

If there is consolation in thinking upon more terrible woes than the present, here is a book to be read now. To those miseries God granted an end. They were succeeded by a century in which mankind, on the whole, made some advance in happiness, knowledge, equality, and the humaner attributes. Looking back upon man's changing fortunes from the midst of our own conflicts, we also may repeat the well-worn words: "Dabit Deus his quoque finem"—to these also God will grant some end.

#### MR. WELLS'S NEW NOVEL.

"The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman." By H. G. WELLS.  
(Macmillan. 6s.)

THE success of Mr. Wells's new novel lies in the meticulous portrait of that representative plutocrat, Sir Isaac Harman, founder and director of the hydra-headed company, "The International Bread and Cake Stores." With his genius for exposing the complicated mechanism of our social order, Mr. Wells has craftily placed Sir Isaac just at the angle where all his mean significance catches the eye, like some trader's stealthily-winking sky-sign. Sir Isaac has risen from the ranks, and for his talent in organizing a great catering business which gives the City clerk a larger pat of butter, a less doubtful cup of coffee, and a more efficient service for his lunch than do the old-fashioned concerns, he has been rewarded by a Parliamentary seat and various social honors. But at forty, Sir Isaac makes a mistake not uncommon among bald-headed millionaires of business genius; he woos and marries a beautiful girl of eighteen, fresh from the boarding-school. Crafty Mr. Wells here enlists against Sir Isaac the forces of those elemental human instincts which lurk beneath the skin of even the Respectabilities. On the one side, behold Sir Isaac, a "bent and peaky invalid, with an obscure kidney disease," incessantly organizing and re-organizing his branch establishments and central bakeries, calculating and planning, inspecting premises, and cutting down expenses; on the other, a disillusioned girl-wife, "with an appealing simplicity in her dark, trustful eyes," living an appallingly narrow life, the centre, so to say, of her husband's possessive jealousy. When we learn Sir Isaac's interpretation of the marriage bond—viz., "that in return for keeping her, dressing her, being kind to her, and giving her the appearances of pride and authority, he has his rights and privileges and undefined powers of control," we know that everything must conspire for Lady Harman's tardy awakening. For the more she is gloated over by the nervous and mean little man, who is always thrusting himself between her and her love of music and any visions of beauty not bounded by the big family mansion at Putney, the more we must see that Sir Isaac has set himself to defy the elusive forces of Nature. With unrelenting cleverness, Mr. Wells's description of the luxurious material comforts which help to suffocate the bride, "the pink bedroom, the white dressing-room, the massive conservatory, the large floriferous garden," not to speak of the Putney personnel, Snagsby, the large, paternal butler, the respectful housekeeper, Mrs. Crumble, the upper-class chauffeur, Clarence, seems to prepare one for the subsequent arrival of "the red and wrinkled and aged-looking infant, looking extraordinarily like its father," which is the first of "the clutch of offspring to be foisted upon her." We perceive here that Lady Harman's fate symbolizes the "right," last evolved, of a woman to be herself, and that

she is a mere battlefield on which the serried ranks of Law, Habit, Property, are massed against the high, incalculable claims of the feminine nature.

How the medieval poets would have treated the theme of "The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman" is patent. The Courts of Love were expressly instituted by the finer spirits of that period for the purpose of restricting the Sir Isaacs to the field of the grosser material advantages which their matrimonial unions conferred on them. But the simple poetical wisdom of the heart of an early century is not for the economists and sociologists, the professors and politicians of the twentieth; and Mr. Wells is out expressly to reconcile the rival pleas of the moralists, social reformers, and poets with the cry of the modern woman for her social and conjugal betterment. It is an extraordinarily complex nexus of moral and social inhibitions that Mr. Wells has set himself to resolve, and, in his indefatigable style, he goes to work to illumine the field of our social welfare by the searchlight of Lady Harman's infelicity. How if Lady Harman's fight against Sir Isaac is bound up with his employees' struggle against being sweated? How if our Rockefellers and Sir Isaacs are starving and stunting the primary demands of health in the community by their "collective" methods, which break up family life and make for a new economic slavery? For, in the case of the employees of "The International Bread and Cake Stores," the organization and discipline of labor which has brought Sir Isaac a large fortune and social honors really mean the exploitation of helpless girls, and so, indirectly, a steady feeding of the springs of prostitution. But such results mean nothing to Sir Isaac in his "merciless hurry to get anything and everything—money, monopoly, power, prominence—whatever any other human being seemed to admire or seemed to find desirable, a lust rather than a living soul." Thus Mr. Wells, before he is half-way through his story, cleverly couples up Lady Harman's struggle for personal liberty, her right to develop her own soul, with her struggle to humanize and alleviate the lot of the sweated waitresses of "The International Bread and Cake Stores."

We must apologize to the author for pointing to the skeleton of his social problems, which, in fact, is disguised by the flesh and blood of his diverting characters. While Sir Isaac steadily alienates our last shreds of sympathy by breaking out in petty rancour and vulgar abuse of his wife when she insists on making a new circle of friends, the artistic, romantic, literary man, Mr. Bromley, who has fallen in love with her, serves the purpose of comic-tragic relief. That is Mr. Wells's artfulness—viz., to keep the passionate Mr. Bromley well under, and even father on him certain sociological disquisitions which Mr. Wells holds ready for us up his sleeve. It is impossible to treat the sentimental adoration of "a stout, middle-sized gentleman" as the guilty passion of a disturber of domestic peace, and Sir Isaac's jealous suspicion, while poor Lady Harman remains pure-eyed candour itself, would appear ridiculous even to the working members of a Vigilance Society. Mr. Wells, having thus fortified his base against any possible attack from Mrs. Grundy, conducts some very skilful operations in his enemies' country. He scores against the Tapirs and Tadpoles of Liberalism in his sketch of the editor of the "Old Country Gazette," Mr. Horatio Blenker, with his "large, fluent person"; he scores against the W.S.P.U. in his smart *silhouettes* of Georgiana Sawbridge and Agatha Alimony. It is true that these characterizations border on caricature, but Mr. Wells never scruples to make whipping-tops of any type of person if it serves his own purpose. And through his satiric sketches of social intercourse blows that rollicking breeze of bubbling high spirits and humorous criticism which his readers hail from Petrograd to Peterborough. The "billowing personality" of Lady Beach-Mandarin, the persistent lady novelist, Miss Sharpser, the sharp-sighted, democratic young person, Susan Burnet—all these and other minor characters are excellent fun, and withal exceedingly human. As a set-off against these excellences, we may note that Lady Harman is never really convincing, and serves indeed as a graceful *mannequin d'osier* on which Mr. Wells hangs feminine garments of his own fashioning. Lady Harman, indeed, has to be "educated" to serve Mr. Wells's purpose, and just as the heroine of "A Lady and Her Husband" showed sur-

## THE Saturday Westminster

for OCTOBER 24 contains

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prising elasticity and clarity of mind for a parasitic middle-aged woman, so Lady Harman shows surprising sweetness and large-mindedness under the bitter east wind of Sir Isaac's spiteful jealousy. The truth is that both of these heroines are cleverly modelled wax figures, set up to show their sex what the modern woman ought to be and isn't. But Mr. Wells's social purpose grows less obtrusive in the last chapters, where the story of Lady Harman's philanthropic hostels gives place to that of Sir Isaac's death. Mr. Wells's brilliant impressionism and pure craftsmanship reassert themselves here, and we regret that the story is prolonged by the closing chapter on Mr. Bromley's emotions, with its over-strained note of farce.

#### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

'A Child of the Orient.' By DEMETRA VAKA. (Lane. 7s. 6d. net.)

THIS autobiographical record of a Greek girl brought up in Turkish surroundings gives a vivid picture of racial and religious antagonisms settling down into something like mutual respect as members of both races understand one another more fully. From her earliest years, the author was taught to hate the Turk and to hope for independence. But as time passed, her little Turkish playmates and their relatives enabled her to see what is good in Turkish life and ideals, and the book ends on a note of tolerance. The author, it is true, has been exceptional in her upbringing. She spent two years of her girlhood in Paris, and when a young woman earned her living for a time as a journalist in the United States. But notwithstanding this, the frank and ingenuous record of the many trifling incidents which fill her pages gives the reader a good understanding of life in the Near East. The book is written in a simple, unpretentious style, while occasional passages, such as her account of an expedition into the tekke of the dervishes of Stamboul, show real narrative power.

#### The Week in the City.

ALTHOUGH dealings in stocks have been on a very small scale, the better news from Russian Poland, and also from Belgium, has imparted more cheerfulness to the City. Money has been very cheap, and the last fifteen millions of Treasury bills have been taken with avidity at an average rate of a little under 3½ per cent. This raises the total subscribed by the public for war purposes to 75 millions, all for six months, except the 7½ millions of twelve months' bills which were subscribed on September 16th. The Bank Return on Thursday was again very satisfactory, showing an addition to the gold reserve, even after three millions had been added for Currency Note Redemption. The new Brazil Funding Bonds are quoted at from 70 to 80—a pretty wide margin. Japanese and Russian Bonds are easier, but Consols are said to be firm at 68½. The ending of the moratorium on bills is a complicated business, but the general view is that nothing unpleasantly sensational can happen so long as debtors are protected by the Courts Emergency Act. The American Exchange has improved in the last few days, and trade generally, apart from Lancashire, is as brisk as could be expected. The West Riding of Yorkshire is busy with khaki orders, but a great deal of the cloth which is being delivered to, and accepted

by, the Contract Department of the War Office is said to be of a disgracefully bad quality.

#### BRAZIL'S DEFAULT.

Without consulting her bondholders and placing her situation before them, Brazil has calmly announced her intention of paying interest for the next three years in paper upon all her external loans, with the exception of the 1903 loan, which is secured upon special revenues, and upon the 1898 Funding Loan, which, as the legacy from the previous default, has the security of the Rio de Janeiro customs revenues pledged to its service. The paper which is to be issued instead of the interest payments is to be secured by a second charge upon these revenues. Brazil's history, all along, is a tale of reckless extravagance, initiated by the Government, and copied by practically all the population, from the officials downwards. Such extravagance, which in the Government shows itself in the purchase of useless Dreadnoughts and the provision of luxurious Government buildings, has only been made possible by continual European borrowing. To meet interest on the huge debt, the tariff has been raised to a very high level, and a fictitious industrial prosperity built upon it, thus hindering the real development of the country which otherwise would have proceeded along the line of producing commodities of exportable value to Europe and the United States. While coffee and rubber remain at low prices, Brazil is bankrupt, and until the national and individual extravagance undergoes a drastic scaling down, she cannot expect to enjoy the confidence of financial Europe.

#### EXPLOITING PATRIOTISM.

There has appeared this week a prospectus inviting subscriptions to 150,000 7 per Cent. Cumulative Preference 10s. shares of a concern called The Hammond Manufacturing Company, Ltd. The total capital is £100,000, of which the balance is 100,000 ordinary shares of 5s. each. The company intends to take up the manufacture of toys, games, dolls, &c., in England to supply the market which is alleged to exist as the result of the cutting off of German exports. For this purpose, factories are to be built and equipped, but no estimate of the cost of such factories or the probable profits to be obtained is ventured upon. One need not be a financial genius, however, to know that the toy industry, as carried on in Germany, is not one which admits of effective competition by organized capital. The toys are mostly made by peasants in their cottages, and the price they receive for them does not admit of the payment of wages such as British industrial workers would accept, let alone the payment of a dividend upon capital; and the prospectus in question does not attempt to urge that factory production would be cheaper than the home industry of the German peasants. The prospectus seems to insinuate, too, that Germany is the only source of supply of peasant-made toys, quite oblivious of the fact that Scandinavia, Switzerland, and Japan are already in the field. German goods, in addition, might still come to England under neutral guise, and the British purchaser will be unable to differentiate. There is also the point quite overlooked in the prospectus that the war will (probably) not last for ever, and that the German people, in an impoverished condition, will be willing to sell their toys at even lower prices than in the past. In view of the thoroughly unsound basis of the scheme, such financial details of the destination of the ordinary shares and the consideration to be received for them are of little importance.

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